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Samuel S. Murphy: Superintendent of the Mobile Public Schools From 1900-1926.

Frank Schneider

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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SAMUEL S. MURPHY: SUPERINTENDENT OF THE
MOBILE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM 1900-1926.**

**Louisiana State University and Agricultural and
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SAMUEL S. MURPHY: SUPERINTENDENT
OF THE MOBILE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FROM 1900-1926

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education

in

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by
Frank Schneider
B.M.Ed., Southeastern Louisiana College, 1946
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ABSTRACT

The Mobile School System, organized in 1852, was the pioneer of common schools in Alabama and in the Southeast, and prepared the way for the establishment of a public school system for the State.

The early struggles of the system, the prejudices which were wrought against it, the affection and confidence of the community, and its beneficent influence upon public education make the history of these schools of unusual interest and value.

It is believed that the superintendent of schools, more than any other single person in a community, influences the quality and structure of a school system. Thus, it may be expected that the ideas and ideals and the philosophies and programs of a superintendent who served as long as did Samuel S. Murphy would be reflected in every area of the school program. That we might gauge his impact on the Mobile School System and his influence on its development from 1900 to 1926 was the purpose of this study.

Murphy was born in Pleasant Ridge, Alabama, on October 8, 1867. He received his early education at Archibald Institute in Pleasant Ridge and attended high school at the Verner Military Academy in Tuscaloosa.

Following his graduation from high school in 1888, Murphy entered the University of Alabama as a sophomore and subsequently was awarded every honor which the University could confer upon a student.

Upon receipt of the B.A. degree in 1890, he was called to the Mobile Public School System where he served as teacher, principal, and superintendent, and to which system he devoted the remainder of his life.

Murphy was genial, kind, and friendly. He was popular, not only in educational circles, but in civic and social life as well. Modesty was an outstanding trait of his character. He declined to boast of his accomplishments and discouraged his friends from doing so. He worked for, with, and through people to bequeath to the community a system of schools of which it could well be proud. His leadership was characterized by diplomacy and persuasion, unifying the system largely through his powerful, yet gentle personality and enabled the Mobile system to be rated among the best in the State and the equal of any in the South.

Although the impact of his leadership was reflected in every facet of the system, significant progress and notable gains were made in: teacher training programs, teacher certification, professionalism in the corps of teachers, curriculum enrichment, vocational education opportunities, health and welfare services, provision of adequate housing, school consolidation, promotion of equal educational opportunities in

rural areas, development of the supervising principalship, and instructional supervision.

Not the least notable contribution was his crusade for adequate financing of public education. He believed that good schools were expensive and stated this fact forthrightly...but stated also that no expense should be spared for the sake of children.

In tracing Murphy's influence on the development of the Mobile School System during this period, the following sources were examined: the Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County, Annual Reports of the Superintendent to the Board and the Department of Education for the State of Alabama, Books of Rules and Regulations of the Board, School Directories, letters from and to Murphy, professional journals, Mobile newspapers, and interviews with persons who were associated professionally with him.

CHAPTER I

THE MOBILE SCHOOLS IN RETROSPECT

I. ORGANIZATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT

Education in the Period Before 1826

Pineda, commissioned by the Spanish governor of Jamaica in 1519 to find a passage west of Florida, is thought to be the first white man to explore Mobile Bay.¹ The Maubilla Indians, who watched him steer his ships toward the shore had not progressed beyond the Stone Age, their meagre culture being marked by mound-building, hunting, fishing, and baking pottery. They could little comprehend Spanish mapmakers at work over their ships' drawing tables, marking the path for those who would follow... Narvaez, De Soto, Maldonado, and Tristan de Luna.

The Spanish were explorers rather than settlers, but the ill fate which befell Narvaez and De Soto seems to have deterred Spaniards from exploring the interior. It was clear that no precious metals would be found; consequently, the Mobile basin was left to the aborigines for the period

¹Peter J. Hamilton, Colonial Mobile (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1910), p. 27.

which Peter J. Hamilton referred to as a "century of obscurity."²

The French claim the distinction of making the first permanent impression on the history of this region with their settlement at Twenty-seven Mile Bluff in 1702, by the LeMoynes brothers, Iberville and Bienville. Catholic priests maintained schools for the religious instruction of the Indians and gave instruction to children of leading families, but no records of schools for the colonists have been found.

The first American school in the present bounds of Alabama was founded in 1799 by John Pierce, a "Typical Connecticut Yankee," at Boat Yard upon Lake Tensas, near Mobile. Pierce and his brother, William, established cotton gins and engaged in other mercantile pursuits. To his "blab-school" came the "high-blood descendants of Lachlan McGillivray, the Taites, Weatherfords and Durants, the aristocratic Linders, the wealthy Mims and others." His "blab-school" functioned in a rude log cabin with furniture to match. Within its log walls, seated upon puncheon benches, Alabama's first pupils -- French, English, Spanish, Indian, and a variety of amalgamations -- began to learn to read, write, and cipher.³

² Ibid.

³ Albert Burton Moore, History of Alabama and Her People, (Chicago: The American Historical Society, 1927), Vol. I., p. 320.

It is possible that other schools of this type were established and prospered, for in 1811 the Legislature of Mississippi Territory, of which Alabama was then a part, granted a charter to Washington Academy located at St. Stephens, and in 1812, to Green Academy in Huntsville.⁴

Although there was a growing interest in the educational welfare of the children during the first three decades of the nineteenth century, educational advantages in Mobile were scarce. Many of the wealthy families on plantations and in town had private tutors for their children but most of the young people were still educated in private schools. Such schools included evening schools, infant schools, female seminaries, and academies.⁵

With the development of Barton Academy at mid-century, private schools and seminaries slowly gave way to an aroused consciousness of the necessity for an education for all. The pioneering period passed, much was accomplished for the cause of education, and a secure foundation for the future laid in the organization of the public school system.⁶

Organization of the Board of School Commissioners

The first attempt at public education in Mobile County,

⁴ Bama Watson, "History of Barton Academy" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, 1950), p. 19.

⁵ Frances L. Sheffield, "Development of Education in Mobile Prior to 1860" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, 1926), p. 66.

⁶ Ibid.

and in Alabama, was made in Mobile in 1826. The Legislature, by Act approved on January 10, created a Board of School Commissioners for Mobile County, to whom were given "full power and authority to establish and regulate schools, and to devise, put in force, and execute such plans and devices for the increase of knowledge, education of youth, and promoting the cause of learning in said county as to them may appear expedient."⁷ In a review of the history of the Mobile School System, Murphy remarked that "the germ of the Mobile System is to be found in this Act."⁸

Unfortunately, this attempt was so feeble and unsatisfactory, that a quarter of a century elapsed before circumstances were so favorable as to cause the "germ" to take root. The Commissioners had an opportunity to establish a public school system that would have been "conspicuous in the south at that time," but they lacked vision and initiative.⁹ Instead of organizing the school anticipated by law, they adopted the easier plan of distributing their funds among the different denominational and private schools.¹⁰

⁷ Willis G. Clark, History of Education in Alabama, 1702-1809 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889), p. 220.

⁸ S. S. Murphy, "The Mobile Public School System," Mobile the Model City (Mobile: Heiter-Starke Printing Company, 1918), p. 9.

⁹ Albert Burton Moore, History of Alabama (Tuscaloosa: University Supply Store, University of Alabama, 1934), p. 323.

¹⁰ Ibid.

In 1836 an Act was adopted which reduced the number of commissioners from twenty-four to thirteen, and authorized the raising of funds by lottery to complete the construction of the Barton Academy which had begun in 1835. Also, the Act provided for a special tax in addition to the other revenues, and for the first time the commissioners were required to make provisions for maintaining schools in the County beyond the limits of the City.¹¹ The occasion is marked in a committee report which prefaces the first recorded Minutes of the Board. Henry Hitchcock, chairman of the committee, concluded the report with the following statement:

- This being the first effort in the city to establish a system of instruction upon an extended plan with funds derived from taxation, and under the direction of commissioners elected by the people, the committee feels a peculiar solicitude in securing public confidence, and they flatter themselves that with the aid of competent teachers who alone should be employed with the prompt attention of the Board, and the fostering hand of the community, and particularly of parents, a System may be established and sustained which shall redound to the credit of the institution and be of great service to future generations.¹²

Mobile School System Established

Until 1852, the school commissioners had not maintained schools of their own, but distributed funds they had among the non-public schools which were administered by

¹¹Clark, History of Education, op. cit., p. 320.

¹²"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1836-1845, p. 1.

the various religious denominations in the City. The Barton Academy had been furnished and rented for private schools, secret societies, and lodging rooms.¹³

The commissioners then in power sought to sell the Barton building and invest the income, and secured the necessary legislation to permit the sale. Section 2 of this Act allowed the sale, provided a majority of the citizens of the County should vote in favor of the sale. Two opposing parties immediately sprang up and the issue to "sell or not to sell" became the exciting and prominent topic of discussion in the County.¹⁴ The Mobile Daily Advertiser, which advocated keeping the building as a nucleus of a system of public schools, stated editorially, that the proposition to sell had created a "storm of indignation such as has been rarely witnessed in this community."¹⁵

At the same election, a new Board of Commissioners was elected, who began at once to repair and remodel the building and formulate plans to organize the schools.

Mr. Willis G. Clark, who was first entrusted with the executive management of the system, reported that, "notwithstanding the unpromising financial conditions and prospects of the Board, the work of preparation went steadily forward,"

¹³ Willis G. Clark, Memorial Record of Alabama (Madison, Wisconsin: Brant and Fuller, 1893), Vol. I., p. 182.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 183.

¹⁵ Murphy, op. cit., p. 10.

and on the first Monday in November, 1852, the first organized public school in the State of Alabama was opened in Barton Academy.¹⁶ Four hundred pupils presented themselves for admission and were in three departments; namely, primary, grammar, and high school for girls. Separate schools were provided for both sexes.

In July, 1853, Mr. Clark was authorized to visit the most approved public schools in the Northern States to bring back information about their systems to "incorporate into" and "perfect the organization in Mobile."¹⁷

The following summer, as a result of Clark's tour in New York, Boston, and other northern cities, as well as because of defects that the Board had recognized, the system was carefully revised. In addition, because of the marked increase in enrollment and the demand for schools "in the country," the school commissioners made arrangements to divide the County into school districts, establish schools throughout the County and employ a superintendent.¹⁸

Since 1852 the work of supervision and direction of the schools had fallen upon the Commissioners and was carried on through such committees as Executive, Accounts, and School Lands. The Board elected Kiah B. Sewall as their

¹⁶Clark, History of Education, op. cit., p. 224.

¹⁷"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1852-1857, p. 77.

¹⁸Ibid.

first superintendent on October 11, 1854, in which position he served for one year.¹⁹ He was succeeded by W. T. Walthall, who served until his death in 1857. At this time the office of superintendent was discontinued, and those duties devolved upon the principal of Boys' High School and the Executive Committee.²⁰

State School System Established

In the winter of 1854 the Honorable A. B. Meek, a member of the House of Representatives from Mobile, submitted a bill providing for the establishing and maintenance of public schools in Alabama. Willis Clark stated that Judge Meek was familiar with the Mobile system and because of the success of the system was incited to provide the State with the great benefits of public schools.²¹ Because the Mobile system was so highly esteemed by the Legislature, the Act which created the State system included the following provision:

...as the County of Mobile has established a public school system of its own, the provisions of this Act shall apply to that County only so far as to authorize its school commissioners to draw the portion of the funds to which that County will be entitled under this Act, and to make the reports to the State Superintendent herein required.²²

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 5.

²⁰ "Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1857-1863, p. 5.

²¹ Clark, History of Education, op. cit., p. 226.

²² Ibid.

This Act served to enlarge the powers of the Commissioners and provide for an increase in their revenues. In addition, it included a clause prohibiting the Board of School Commissioners from ever diverting any portion of the school fund to the maintenance or support of any schools that were under sectarian influence or control.²³

Additional legislation beneficial to the Mobile Public School System was the Special Act approved on February 15, 1856. It provided that all monies collected for the State by the judge of probate for certain licenses should be appropriated to the Mobile County School fund. Also, it authorized the Board of School Commissioners to levy an annual tax "not exceeding one twentieth of one per centum upon the real and personal property of the County of Mobile" for the benefit of the public schools of the County. Although the Act contained only two sections, it greatly influenced the rapid growth and development of the system until the spring of 1865.²⁴

The Reconstruction Period

During the period of Civil War hostilities schools continued to be operated as usual, but were closed when Federal troops occupied Mobile in the spring of 1865.²⁵ The following October, however, they were opened under authority

²³Ibid., p. 225.

²⁴Ibid., p. 227.

²⁵Murphy, op. cit., p. 11.

of the provisional government. Because the funds of the Board were in Confederate notes and securities the schools were then maintained by tuition charges and special taxes authorized by the provisional Legislature.²⁶

The three-year period from the end of the war in 1865, when the Reconstruction government was inaugurated, was the one which Stephen Weeks referred to as the "Intermediate Period." "This period," he stated, "was largely barren of educational results in Alabama."²⁷ Murphy wrote that during this period "nothing unusual happened in the progress of the Mobile schools." But the period from 1868 to 1875, according to Murphy, was a period during which the schools passed through many stormy vicissitudes.²⁸ In 1868, under the Constitution of 1867, a new State government was inaugurated and all educational matters were placed under the control of a "board of education."²⁹ This board was a legislative body, except that their Acts might be amended or set aside by the State Legislature. Otherwise, their Acts became laws on approval by the governor. One of their first

²⁶Clark, History of Education, op. cit., p. 229.

²⁷Stephen B. Weeks, History of Public School Education in Alabama, United States Bureau of Education, Bulletin No. 12 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1915), p. 84.

²⁸Murphy, loc. cit.

²⁹Clark, Memorial Record, op. cit., p. 186.

Acts was to abolish the independent school system of Mobile.³⁰

The State Board declared vacant the office of county superintendent and appointed G. L. Putnam superintendent of education in Mobile. New commissioners were appointed and, through Putnam, demanded possession of the books, papers and other property of the Board of School Commissioners.³¹ What followed was described by Stephen Weeks as a war between the Mobile school commissioners made up of both Republicans and Conservatives on one hand, and the Board of Education, the State Superintendent, and the Mobile County Superintendent on the other.³² The dedication of the Mobile School Commissioners to a cause which they believed was just, is described in the following account by Willis G. Clark:

Believing that a proper construction of the law forbade this interference of the board of education, and that the changes and policy contemplated would be inimical to the best interest of the school system they had labored so faithfully to build up, and even threatened its destruction, the school commissioners of Mobile resisted, firmly and persistently, all attempts on the part of the appointees of the board of education to wrest the schools from their control. In the course of the litigation which followed, a mandamus was obtained from the circuit judge of the district commanding the board to deliver up the books and school property in possession. Acting under legal advice and in accordance with their views of duty, the commissioners refused obedience to this mandate and took an appeal to the Supreme Court of the State.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Clark, Memorial Record, op. cit., p. 233.

³²Weeks, loc. cit.

Pending the appeal, they were judged guilty of contempt and were committed by the circuit judge to the common jail of the county. Here they remained over forty-eight hours, but were treated, in all save restriction to the jail limits, as honored guests rather than prisoners, and were the recipients of innumerable courtesies and attention from the officers in charge and from the citizens of Mobile. On the third day a mandate was received from one of the judges of the Supreme Court, ordering their release, and they were promptly discharged from custody.³³

The following July, the Supreme Court rendered a decision in favor of the Board of School Commissioners on the mandamus case appealed by them from the Mobile Circuit Court. The State authorities, determined in their purpose, passed an Act repealing the law which made Mobile an independent system, and refused to pay any State funds to the Mobile Commissioners. Because the Mobile School Commissioners were unwilling to deprive the people of Mobile of their schools, which could not be maintained without State funds, they surrendered the school buildings and records and gave up any further attempt to control the schools. The Mobile Public Schools were subsequently administered by the State "board of education" until the Spring of 1871.³⁴

³³Weeks, op. cit., p. 233.

³⁴Weeks, op. cit., p. 234.

II. LAYING THE NEW FOUNDATION

The Constitution of 1875 abolished the "board of education" and restored all legislation in school matters to the General Assembly. On the adoption of this Constitution it was deemed advisable to return to the old system of management of the Mobile Public Schools, "under which they had been organized, built up, and become so popular and prosperous."³⁵

The Leadership of E. R. Dickson, 1871-1894

Mr. E. R. Dickson had served as rector of the academic department of the University of Alabama, and was called to the Mobile Public School System by the "old board" to serve as general principal of Barton Academy. When the law was enacted in 1871, which restored to the people the election of school commissioners, he was appointed superintendent. Under his judicious and energetic management, and with the large powers given him, order was gradually restored, and the schools were placed once more in good working condition.³⁶

The Executive Committee report bearing on attendance at the opening of the school year 1871-72, stated that "the schools have been opened and are now in full operation and the school houses are all full, or nearly so."³⁷ A total of

³⁵Weeks, op. cit., p. 235.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1871-1886, p. 31.

one hundred and one Negro and white teachers were employed and assigned as follows:

<u>District</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Negro</u>	<u>Total</u>
Barton Academy	26	-	26
City District Schools	15	21	36
County District Schools	<u>29</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>39</u>
Total	70	31	101 ³⁸

The nine-member board of commissioners elected under the aforementioned law had little authority and served simply as advisors when the new superintendent desired their counsel. Consequently, he was practically the official head and director of the schools. However, with the adoption of the Constitution of 1875, which marked the completed rehabilitation of the State, all legislation in school matters was returned to the General Assembly. A new board of commissioners was elected to whom the control of the schools was again invested and to whom was empowered the selection of a superintendent and such other officers or agents as they may from time to time deem expedient. The new board promptly re-elected Dickson superintendent and secretary in which capacity he served until his resignation in March, 1894.³⁹

During the tenure of Superintendent Dickson, the schools of Mobile County "steadily grew in numbers, effi-

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Clark, History of Education, op. cit., p. 235.

ciency and influence."⁴⁰ The course of study ranged from the first steps in the primary department to a high school curriculum comparable to the third year in the "ordinary college." Graduates from the Boys' High School readily obtained placement in the sophomore and junior classes of the University of Alabama, while the Girls' High School prepared its pupils for advanced positions in the teaching profession.⁴¹

At the time the Board accepted his resignation, they referred to Dickson as being "inseparably allied to the history of the Mobile Public Schools, their history in a large part as his history."⁴²

The Tenure of John D. Yerby, 1894-1900

To fill the unexpired term of E. R. Dickson, the Board, on March 14, 1894, elected John D. Yerby, principal of Boys' High School. Until his death in August, 1900, Yerby seemed to have worked earnestly to provide quality education for all the children in Mobile County. Although his statements and recommendations reflected interest in all areas of school business, he evidenced great concern for strong teacher certi-

⁴⁰Clark, Memorial Record, op. cit., p. 188.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1887-1898, p. 219.

fication laws,⁴³ need for better accommodations for "colored" children,⁴⁴ better location and consolidation of country schools so that no two schools should be closer than three miles, "overcrowding" the high school course of study, and allowing students who cannot write a correct paragraph to study Greek and psychology.⁴⁵ He continually pointed out the importance of basic work in the primary grades, and stressed the need for children to learn the "three R's."

The steady growth which characterized the administration of E. R. Dickson continued throughout Yerby's tenure. His final report to the State Superintendent of Education for the school session, 1899-1900, showed greatly improved "conditions of educational work," not so much by an increase in attendance but by growth of a healthy public sentiment.⁴⁶

⁴³Department of Education of the State of Alabama, Biennial Report for the Scholastic Year Ending September 30, 1899 and 1900 (Montgomery: A. Roemer, 1900), p. 204.

⁴⁴"Minutes," 1887-1898, op. cit., p. 401.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Biennial Report, 1899 and 1900, op. cit., p. 203.

CHAPTER II

SAMUEL S. MURPHY, THE SUPERINTENDENT, 1900-1926

As in other southern states, public education in Alabama is largely a twentieth century development. Albert Moore stated that virtually all of the strong features of the present system of education in the State had grown up between 1905 and 1934. The development of a high school system, the grading of the elementary schools and the adoption of a uniform course of study for them, the improvement in the quality of teaching, and the systematic articulation of the schools during this era constituted in themselves an educational renaissance.¹

In light of the progress of education in Mobile County prior to 1900, as well as educational developments throughout the State during the first quarter of the twentieth century, one might expect an educator of no small stature to have served during this period as superintendent of the school system which pioneered education in Alabama. Samuel Silenus Murphy, whom the Board elected to succeed Yerby, may have been such a person.

¹Albert Burton Moore, History of Alabama (Tuscaloosa: University Supply Store, University of Alabama, 1934), p. 736.

Early Years

Pleasant Ridge. Murphy, son of Samuel Silenus and Elizabeth Steele, was born in Pleasant Ridge, Green County, Alabama, on October 8, 1867. His father had attended the Medical College in New Orleans in 1850, but was operating a mercantile business at the time Samuel Silenus, Junior, was born.² However, in 1870, he resumed and completed training at the Mobile Medical College in Mobile, and subsequently established a medical practice in Pleasant Ridge.

Murphy received his early education at Archibald Institute in Pleasant Ridge, but when he reached high school age he was sent to Tuscaloosa to attend the Verner Military Academy.

Tuscaloosa. Following his graduation from high school in 1888, Murphy entered the University of Alabama as a sophomore, and subsequently received every honor which the school could confer on a student. During his senior year he served as first lieutenant in the corps of cadets.³

Mobile. Upon receipt of the A.B. degree in 1890, Murphy was called to teach in the Mobile School System by Superintendent E. R. Dickson.⁴ The influence of Julius T. Wright,

²Thomas M. Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1921), Vol. IV, p. 1262.

³News item in The Mobile Register, October 31, 1954.

⁴Ibid., September 9, 1900.

a former college roommate, was an additional factor in Murphy's decision to locate in Mobile. Wright was contemplating the organization of a private school, which was to become known as the University Military School, and he invited Murphy to "go in with him." Although they were close friends, Murphy preferred to "cast his lot" with the Mobile Public Schools.⁵

Murphy had planned to pursue a medical career, as did his father and two brothers, and considered teaching as a temporary job rather than a career. However, after being assigned to teach at Boys' High, he discovered that he was "wild about teaching,"⁶ and the boys were "crazy about him."⁷

The period which he served as teacher was evidently successful, having been marked by promotions and increased responsibility. For the school sessions 1893-94, and 1894-95, he worked as assistant principal of the Boys' Senior Grammar School, and from 1895 until 1899, as first assistant to Ben S. Woodcock, principal of the Boys' High School. By 1899, he had been appointed teaching-principal of the Boys' Junior and Primary School, a division of Barton Academy, which had a faculty of seven teachers.

⁵Mrs. S. S. Murphy, personal interview, April 20, 1964.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Robert Peterson, personal interview, December 13, 1965.

Election as Superintendent

Although Murphy was not a native of Mobile, he was a product of Alabama, and it would be said of him that he labored for more than a quarter of a century with faithfulness and ability for the cause of education, and as a result of his zeal and intelligent efforts, the public schools in Mobile County are rated among the best in the State, and the equal of any in the South.⁸

The unanimous vote which Samuel S. Murphy received from the Board on September 5, 1900, marked the beginning of the longest tenure by a superintendent in the Mobile Public School System.

I. PUPILS

Throughout Murphy's tenure as superintendent, he submitted a monthly report to the Board showing "condition of the schools," along with recommendations for improvements which should be made. Such reports included data which showed the number of pupils enrolled and average attendance. Minutes of the Board, however, prior to April, 1911, do not include this information; rather, only the statement that it was received and filed.

Enrollment

For the 1900-1901 school session, Murphy's first year

⁸ Editorial in The Mobile Register, November 5, 1926.

in office, there were 8,720 pupils enrolled in the Mobile Public School System. For the session, 1925-1926, Murphy's last year as Superintendent, the enrollment was reported to be 18,607, an increase of 9,887 pupils, or 53.6 per cent.

The system was in a healthy and growing condition in 1900,⁹ and except for the sessions 1908-1909, and 1918-1919, the over-all enrollment data relative to white and Negro schools reflect growth at a continuous and steady rate, as indicated in Table I. The decrease of pupils in 1908 was reported to have occurred as a result of a tuition fee charged in the high school, and an incidental fee of fifty cents per year assessed in the primary and elementary grades.¹⁰

The decrease in enrollment for the 1918-1919 school session occurred only in Negro high school grades, and although it affected the rate of increase, it was not sufficient to prevent an increase in the total enrollment for that year. The enrollment in white schools had increased by 800 pupils above the previous school session, and enrollment in Negro elementary grades had outstripped available housing for them. However, the number of Negro pupils in

⁹Department of Education of the State of Alabama, Biennial Report for the Scholastic Year Ending September 30, 1899 and 1900 (Montgomery: A. Roemer, 1900), p. 203.

¹⁰"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1909-1913, p. 10.

TABLE I*

PUPIL POPULATION IN THE MOBILE PUBLIC
SCHOOLS, 1900 - 1926
(Based on Average Daily Attendance)

SESSION	Average Daily Attendance		
	White	Negro	Total
1900 - 1901	3,461	2,029	5,490
1901 - 1902	3,913	2,014	5,927
1902 - 1903	4,181	2,157	6,338
1903 - 1904	4,234	2,307	6,541
1904 - 1905	4,403	2,399	6,802
1905 - 1906	4,685	2,500	7,185
1906 - 1907	Not Available		
1907 - 1908	Not Available		
1908 - 1909	4,318	1,719	6,037
1909 - 1910	4,773	2,570	7,343
1910 - 1911	Not Available		
1911 - 1912	Not Available		
1912 - 1913	5,567	2,363	7,930
1913 - 1914	6,005	2,546	8,551

TABLE I (continued)

SESSION	Average Daily Attendance		
	White	Negro	Total
1914 - 1915	7,115	2,883	9,998
1915 - 1916	7,118	3,293	10,411
1916 - 1917	7,130	3,368	10,498
1917 - 1918	7,159	3,185	10,344
1918 - 1919	7,569	2,918	10,487
1919 - 1920	7,158	3,404	10,562
1920 - 1921	9,762	3,814	13,576
1921 - 1922	10,315	4,409	14,724
1922 - 1923	Not Available		
1923 - 1924	10,399	4,416	14,815
1924 - 1925	10,623	4,573	15,196
1925 - 1926	10,716	4,600	15,316

*Based on data contained in annual reports of the Department of Education of the State of Alabama from 1900 to 1926.

city schools had decreased by one-hundred and twenty-five. Murphy reported that this decrease "no doubt, was due to the scarcity of labor and the high scale of wages prevailing."¹¹

Compulsory Attendance Law

Murphy frequently pointed up the low average attendance and placed much of the blame on the "indifference shown by parents."¹² In 1911, he stated his belief in rigid enforcement of the rules governing tardiness, and recommended rules requiring compulsory attendance.¹³

Such legislation was enacted in 1915, when the State Legislature passed the Compulsory Attendance Law, which was enforced in the Mobile School System beginning on October 1, 1917. The Law provided that county boards of education should divide their respective counties, exclusive of cities and towns of over two thousand population, into not less than one, or more than five attendance districts, and the boards should appoint an attendance officer for every district so created, who would hold office at the will of the County Board of Education.

¹¹"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1916-1919, p. 263.

¹²"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1898-1904, p. 104, et. passim.

¹³"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 212.

Upon Murphy's recommendation, the Board divided the County into the following three districts:

District One - to embrace the territory within the circumference of a circle drawn with a radius of eight miles, with the court house as the center.

District Two - that portion of the County south of the Tanner Ferry Road and meeting the line of District One.

District Three - that portion of the County north of the Tanner Ferry Road and meeting the line of District N. One.¹⁴

This development may have greatly pleased Murphy, if we faithfully interpret his following statement:

When parents allow children to stay away from school merely to do errands or to see a circus parade, then I wish they could feel the importance of Professor Munsterberg's words, "Give to the school the right of way."¹⁵

Health Services

Although bad roads and "swollen branches" had some effect on the average daily attendance, it seemed that there was greater concern for the health of pupils as a factor in the attendance record. Frequent references are made in board minutes to smallpox, trachoma, chicken-pox, mumps, scarlet fever, and measles.¹⁶ By 1904, water coolers had

¹⁴"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 157.

¹⁵"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 104.

¹⁶Ibid., et passim.

been ordered for placement in the City schools,¹⁷ but water buckets and community dippers were to be used for many years in the County schools.¹⁸

Medical inspector. In 1909, in an apparent effort to attack health problems in the schools, the Board retained Dr. Toulmin Gaines as the school medical inspector at fifty dollars per month, subject to the instruction of the superintendent.¹⁹ Re-admittance certificates were immediately required of pupils who were absent due to infectious diseases.²⁰ The medical inspector proceeded to visit schools and make monthly reports to the Board relative to health of pupils and hygienic conditions of buildings. The comprehensive list of duties for which he was held responsible is shown in Appendix A.

Visiting nurses. On February 10, 1915, Murphy stated that provision for a visiting nurse "is in line with the policy of our most progressive school systems, and the services of a nurse are highly desirable."²¹ Two months later Miss Celina Baldwin was selected for this position at a sal-

¹⁷"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1904-1909, p. 9.

¹⁸Alma Bryant, personal interview, September 15, 1965.

¹⁹"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 176.

²⁰Ibid., p. 182.

²¹"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1913-1916, p. 80.

ary of sixty dollars per month.²² In addition to visiting schools in the City, she was obligated to go to all suburban schools "that can be conveniently reached by the car line."²³

Dental inspections. It had been Murphy's desire to inaugurate a program of dental inspections in the schools,²⁴ but because he "realized the finances of the Board," he "refrained from making any recommendations in this matter." In 1913, however, he secured approval for a cooperative program whereby the Association of Southern College Women and the Mobile County Dental Society conducted dental inspections in the schools without charge to the Board.²⁵

Welfare Workers

At the time that attendance workers were being considered to enforce the Compulsory Attendance Law, Commissioner Elizabeth Fonde, a long-time advocate of welfare work, proposed that "such officers be combined with welfare workers."²⁶

The Compulsory Attendance Law included the stipulation that attendance workers who were appointed by the County board of education should be paid out of the County treasury, and the attendance officers appointed by City boards of education shall be paid out of the City treasury.

²²Ibid., p. 237.

²³Ibid., p. 321.

²⁴"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 29.

²⁵"Minutes," 1913-1916, op. cit., p. 29.

²⁶"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 106.

The County board agreed to pay the salary of one of the two County attendance workers, both of whom were to devote their time to welfare work in the County after the expiration of the compulsory attendance period. At this time, the Board of School Commissioners agreed to redistrict the County into two districts, rather than three.²⁷

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Mobile resolved to cooperate with the Board of School Commissioners by providing one-half the salaries of "two capable welfare workers and truant officers," in aid of the truant and child labor laws of the State, and the safeguard and protection of the health of children of the City, and the securing of medical attention for those unable to obtain it.²⁸

Monthly reports submitted by attendance and welfare workers point up the "thorough and satisfactory work" carried on by officers in the City, but work in the County was hampered by lack of transportation for the County workers.²⁹ After Murphy reported, "unless some arrangements can be perfected looking to adequate transportation, this work will be a failure," the Board approved the purchase of a Ford automobile for this purpose.³⁰

²⁷Ibid., p. 256.

²⁸Ibid., p. 265.

²⁹"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1919-1922, p. 301.

³⁰"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 395.

The cooperative arrangement with the municipal and County authorities was described by Murphy as "a unique arrangement in this section of the country;" and amounted to a department of child welfare.³¹

II. TEACHERS

Certification

Since the beginning of the Mobile Public School System, teachers had been required to have certificates issued by the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County, in order to teach in the system.³² Superintendent E. R. Dickson continued the practice of holding annual teacher examinations, but it was during his administration that all certificates were "called in," after which time the following three categories of certificates were issued:

First Grade--Valid for Six Years
Second Grade--Valid for Four Years
Third Grade--Valid for Four Years³³

To instruct the 8,720 pupils enrolled in the Mobile School System during 1899-1900, there were 18⁴ teachers. Of this number, twenty-three held first-grade certificates,

³¹S. S. Murphy, "The Mobile Public School System," Mobile, the Model City (Mobile: Heiter-Starke Printing Company, 1918), p. 13.

³²Organization of the Board of Mobile School Commissioners and Regulations of the Public Schools for the City and County of Mobile, 1854 (Mobile: Benjamin, Farrow and Company, 1854), p. 14.

³³"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1904-1909, p. 166.

sixty-four held second-grade certificates, and ninety-seven teachers held third-grade certificates.³⁴ Thus, when Murphy assumed his superintendency duties, the practice of awarding teaching certificates by the local Board was highly organized and long-standing. This was in marked contrast to the "happy-go-lucky" procedures used in many other Alabama school districts.³⁵

To understand the procedure approved for the Mobile School System, it may be helpful to cite the following regulation:

Section 1. This board of teacher examiners shall consist of the superintendent, as chairman, and two other members.

Section 2. On the third Monday and Tuesday in June of each year, the board of examiners shall hold an examination for the purpose of examining candidates for positions as teachers in Mobile County Public Schools and at such other times as the board of school commissioners shall direct.

Section 3. The following classes of certificates shall be granted. 1. High School Certificates. 2. Principals' Certificates. 3. Assistant Certificates. 4. Special Certificates.

Section 4. Applicants for a high school certificate shall be examined in the following subjects: Algebra, geometry, Latin, physics, trigonometry, literature, English, American and general history, physiology with school hygiene, rhetoric and pedagogy, civil government including Alabama History. An examination may be required upon the common English branches at the discretion of the chairman of the board of examiners.

³⁴Biennial Report, 1899 and 1900, op. cit., p. 203.

³⁵Ibid., p. 204.

Section 5. Certificates shall be valued as follows: For one year an average of 70 per cent, will be required; for two years an average of 80 per cent; and for three years an average of 90 per cent. No certificate will be granted to those who fall below 60 per cent in any subject.

Sections six, seven, and eight included provisions for teachers who held three-year certificates to have them renewed without an examination, the reporting of examination results to the Board, and the signing of the certificates by the president, chairman of the executive committee, and chairman of the examining committee. The regulations included the following eight additional sections:

Section 9. The present teachers who have taught in the public schools of Mobile County for one session or longer will not be required to attend an examination unless they apply for positions in the schools higher than those they now hold.

Section 10. All applicants for positions in the country schools shall be required to hold at least an assistant's certificate provided that those teachers who apply for high school positions in country schools must have high school certificates.

Section 11. No teacher will be transferred from a grammar school to a high school nor promoted to a principalship of a grammar [primary] school unless he holds the required certificate.

Section 12. No one shall be eligible to appointment as a teacher in the high school or principalship unless he had a four-year high school course or its equivalent, also two years practical experience in teaching.

Section 13. The members of the board of examiners (exclusive of the superintendent) shall receive \$5.00 each per diem for their services while conducting the examinations.

Section 14. At present no examinations in music or drawing will be required, but it will be to the advantage of candidates to have both a theoretical or practical knowledge of these branches.

Section 15. In issuing a high school or principal certificate, the board of school commissioners may accept a diploma from a university or state normal school in lieu of an examination upon the recommendation of the board of examiners.

Section 16. All applicants who make the required per cent, shall have their names placed on a list to be known as the "Eligible List," from which teachers may be selected. All appointments of teachers shall be made on the basis of standing in examination, and in all cases of promotion by length and character of service, provided that in all cases of promotion and appointments the best interests of the schools shall only be considered.

A teacher was not allowed to teach in grades above that for which she had a certificate of qualification issued by the Board, except when assigned to a one-teacher school "in the country."³⁶ Also, the Board continually adhered to the policy of filling all vacancies with graduates of the public schools of Mobile County, and in the event there was not "ample material," they were filled with graduates of the public schools of the State of Alabama.³⁷

In 1909, the Board moved to recognize the second and third grade certificates issued by the State as "co-equal with the certificates issued by the Board."³⁸ By 1912, the

³⁶"Minutes," 1904-1907, op. cit., p. 84.

³⁷"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 78.

³⁸"Minutes," 1904-1909, p. 10.

Board had recognized, in addition to the third and second grade certificates, the first, special and department certificates. The subjects in which teachers were examined for the five certificates were as follows:

Third Grade: Orthography, arithmetic, geography, grammar, physiology and hygiene, theory and practice, and United States history.

Second Grade: Orthography, arithmetic, geography, grammar, physiology and hygiene, theory and practice, and United States and Alabama history.

First Grade: Algebra, geometry, trigonometry, physics, Latin, literature, rhetoric, Alabama history, physiology, theory and practice.

Special: All examinations as will meet the requirements of the special subjects taught.

Applicants for the Department certificates must have taught not less than four years in the Mobile public schools, all of which must have been continuous in one department, and must have taken the professional examination in the technique of the work of that department, methods, theory and practice of teaching, and classroom management.³⁹

Such teacher examinations were held each year in the month of June until 1914. Because the number of examinations administered by the State had increased to three per year, and because he regarded those held by the county "as superfluous," Murphy recommended that the Board "dispense with

³⁹By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County, 1912 (Mobile: Mobile Book Binding Company, 1912), p. 33.

the local examinations."⁴⁰

There seems to be no further record of locally administered teacher examinations until 1919, when, due to the shortage of teachers because of World War I, examinations were given for temporary teaching licenses. Such certificates were awarded for only one year, but such was the dearth of teachers, Murphy reported in 1920 that, "it is highly probable that we will have in our teaching corps a number of teachers who must be accepted on temporary certificates, and we have no accurate knowledge of their scholastic attainments."⁴¹ This condition became so acute that in the spring of 1922, he recommended that "certificates be waived," and that teachers be reappointed conditionally, the condition being that they qualify at the next examination, extend their certificates by Reading Circle examination or by attendance at some recognized summer school prescribed by the State.⁴²

By 1924, a large number of the Mobile teachers held certificates issued by the State Department of Education, which were renewed by examination or "doing certain professional work." Yet, many other teachers held certificates issued locally by the Board of School Commissioners,

⁴⁰"Minutes," 1913-1916, p. 123.

⁴¹"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 94.

⁴²Ibid., p. 314.

which were renewed from time to time without any additional requirements. In order that all teachers be subject to the same general regulations, Murphy secured Board approval for the following resolution:

Be it Resolved: That all certificates, of whatever name or kind, issued by the Board of School Commissioners, be declared null and void on the 30th day of June, 1923, provided, however, that such certificates will be extended from time to time upon such conditions as the State prescribes for the extension of certificates;

That the Superintendent be instructed to notify the holders of certificates issued by this Board of the above facts, and that he prepare in writing the conditions upon which such certificates may be extended, and furnish a copy of same to those persons now holding the Mobile County certificates.⁴³

Certificates issued by the Board were extended for a period of one year on any one of such conditions as, completion of the State Reading Circle Course, or a six weeks course of study in a Class A Normal School. However, under neither condition was a certificate extended beyond two years.

Cadet Teachers

Murphy frequently expressed disapproval of the practice of assigning young and inexperienced teachers to "country schools," before being eligible to teach in the city

⁴³Ibid., p. 393.

schools.⁴⁴ He considered the system to be a unified one, and felt the need to "expend the same fostering care to rural schools as those in the city."

In an effort to "increase the efficiency of the teaching corps," he recommended the appointment of a corps of teachers to be known as "cadet teachers," at a monthly salary of twenty-five dollars each. Under such a plan, cadet teachers were selected from those who had the highest standing in the summer training school, and, after one year's service in the City schools, they were carefully graded and their names placed on the eligibility list in the order of their standing. They were eligible then for appointment in rural schools at a monthly salary of fifty-five dollars. Murphy believed that such a plan would produce the following results: "A training course for rural teachers under expert supervision; the abolishing of substitute teachers; opportunity for new teachers to gain experience in all grades, primary and grammar; relieving of principals from classroom duty when necessary to confer with parents and observe general conditions of discipline in their schools."⁴⁵

The cadet teacher plan was approved by the Board on Saturday, September 10, 1913, and cadet teachers were assigned to Oakdale, Russell, Leinkauf, and Semmes Elementary

⁴⁴"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., 203.

⁴⁵"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 405.

Schools. Their duties included taking charge of any class during the absence of the regular teacher, observing teachers and assisting the regular teachers, and giving special instruction to "such pupils as had fallen behind, due to illness or other causes." They were not allowed to function as "cadets in training" for longer than two years.⁴⁶

Although cadet teachers were employed throughout Murphy's tenure, the last reference made to them in Minutes of the Board was in 1924. At that time they were employed to assist principals of those schools having ten classes or more.⁴⁷

Superintendent's "Must" Meetings

A Board policy of long standing required that teachers meet with the superintendent once each month to discuss "practical questions of school management and best methods of teaching."⁴⁸ Such meetings were held on the first Saturday of each month. Because all teachers were required to attend, the Board defrayed the traveling expenses of the rural teachers. In addition to Murphy's lectures, the supervising principal of the Barton primary department assisted

⁴⁶"Minutes," 1913-1916, op. cit., p. 282.

⁴⁷"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1922-1926, p. 215.

⁴⁸Department of Education of the State of Alabama, Biennial Report for the Scholastic Year Ending September 30, 1899 and 1900 (Montgomery: A. Roemer, 1900), p. 204.

him in the "regular work of the monthly meetings."⁴⁹

By 1912, the corps of teachers had increased to the extent that three classes were being held, the first and third Saturdays for white teachers and the second Saturday for Negro teachers.⁵⁰

When the growth of the system warranted the appointment of an assistant superintendent, the supervision of the country schools, along with supervision of such in-service meetings for rural teachers, was delegated to him. Later, after 1913, when instructional supervisors were added, they too shared this responsibility. Although other teacher-training activities were carried on, such as summer training schools, Reading Circle Clubs and grade-level meetings, the superintendent's "Must" meetings were carried on throughout Murphy's tenure.⁵¹

Summer Training School

In his first annual report to the Board in 1901, Murphy strongly expressed his belief that "the efficiency of a school system depends upon the efficiency of its corps of teachers."⁵² He then recommended the establishment of a

⁴⁹"Minutes," 1904-1909, op. cit., p. 250.

⁵⁰"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 309.

⁵¹"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 256.

⁵²"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 104.

training school where teachers could be required to do practice work under the supervision of a skilled teacher. However, it was not until the summer of 1910 that this vision became a reality.⁵³ Murphy referred to the administration of the training school in the following excerpt from an annual report:

During the summer just past, there was inaugurated a teachers' vacation training school. We found this necessary from the fact that each year we are sending to our country schools young women, perhaps well equipped from the standpoint of scholarship, but absolutely without experience so far as discipline and imparting knowledge are concerned. The question arose in my mind, why should these teachers gain experience at the expense of the country boy and girl.

His description of the plan follows:

The length of the school term is six weeks. The teachers in training actually do classroom work under the guidance of trained teachers. The hours for teaching are from nine until twelve, when the pupils are dismissed. In the afternoon the teachers are lectured by the training teachers upon the most essential features of school work. No attempt is made to lecture upon pedagogy or such subjects, this being left to our normal schools.

Pupils in the county who failed of promotion, or any who desire to do more work than is usually done in the school term are permitted to attend this school, thus affording material for our teachers in training. No fee is charged either teachers or pupils. At the close of the session, the teachers are graded, and no inexperienced teacher is employed until those names on the list of training teachers are exhausted. The

⁵³"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 48.

school is intended in no way to conflict with our State summer schools.⁵⁴

In 1913, Murphy reported that "inexperienced colored teachers are in need of some training before attempting to teach," and recommended offering a six-week training course for Negro teachers. He stipulated that both training schools could be carried on at no cost to the Board. However, in 1919 an annual appropriation of \$250.00 became available from the Slater Fund to hold classes for Negro teachers.

At first any high school graduate was allowed to attend the training schools, but because of crowded classes and the need to require teachers to stay in the teaching profession, the regulations were amended to require applicants to secure teaching certificates to become eligible to take the courses.⁵⁵

The largest summer school was probably held during the summer of 1923, when fifty-six applicants received certificates.⁵⁶ The Board never officially approved such a measure, but they followed the practice of awarding a bonus of fifty dollars for white teachers who took the course, and twenty-five dollars for "colored" teachers.⁵⁷

⁵⁴Department of Education of Alabama, Annual Report for the Scholastic Year Ending September 30, 1910 (Montgomery: The Brown Printing Company, 1910), p. 98.

⁵⁵"Minutes," 1913-1916, op. cit., p. 11.

⁵⁶"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1922-1926, p. 72.

⁵⁷"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 73.

Teachers Retirement System

Because of its concern for the welfare of retired teachers "who had served long and faithfully in the schools," the Board gave consideration to a teachers' retirement fund in November, 1912.⁵⁸

Aside from the dissatisfaction expressed by the Board with the legislation which it introduced to allow the expenditure of funds for this purpose, records pertinent to this program seem to be incomplete.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, beginning in November, 1915, teachers began to make application to have their names placed on the "pension roll."⁶⁰

Apparently there was no approved policy followed in awarding retirement monies, inasmuch as each application was considered separately. Consideration seemed to be given to such factors as age, length of service in the Mobile System, and dependency and economic status.⁶¹

In March, 1916, upon a request from the newly formed Mobile Teachers Association, the Board approved a pension plan for white teachers which provided for compulsory salary deductions.⁶² Thereafter, contract forms which were

⁵⁸ "Minutes," 1913-1916, op. cit., p. 311.

⁵⁹ "Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 275.

⁶⁰ "Minutes," 1913-1916, op. cit., p. 305.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., p. 357.

distributed to white teachers each Spring included the following stipulation:

Your employment is conditioned on your meeting all legal requirements as to a certificate, and subject to the pension plan adopted by the Mobile Teachers' Association; the plan provides for a sick benefit, and an annuity. Deductions made every two months will be as follows:

1 to 10 years service, Mobile Public Schools... 1/2%
of salary
11 to 20 years service, Mobile Public Schools... 1%
of salary
20 years service and over, Mobile Public Schools...
1 1/2% of salary⁶³

The Board, however, continued to receive and process pension requests from both Negro and white applicants, using Board funds for this purpose.⁶⁴

In 1923, Palmer Pillans, the school board attorney, drafted a Bill, which, when approved, permitted the monthly pension of twenty dollars to be increased to thirty dollars.⁶⁵

Salaries

Murphy advocated paying the best salaries possible and demanding the most efficient service. He felt that the success of any system of schools depended largely upon the efficiency of its teaching force. He stated that "good

⁶³Data from teacher's certificate, Mobile Public Schools, 1920.

⁶⁴"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 339, et. passim.

⁶⁵"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1922-1926, p. 104.

salaries will command good teachers, and the best should be none too good for the children of Mobile County."⁶⁶

Over the years, there had been considerable variance in the manner in which salaries were set. Teachers who were assigned to City schools were more highly paid than rural teachers, and Negro teachers were paid somewhat less than white City and rural teachers. The monthly salaries paid the one hundred and eighty-seven teachers who were recommended for the 1900-01 school session could be grouped in the following categories:

<u>Location of Assignment</u>	<u>Amount of Salary</u>	
	<u>White</u>	<u>Negro</u>
City	\$53.95	\$35.00
Rural	\$35.00	\$30.00

By 1904, the salaries of the country school teachers had been increased an average of five dollars per month. Some received as much as a ten dollar increase while others were kept at the same salary. Teaching-principals, assigned to schools where assistant teachers were assigned, received approximately ten dollars more than classroom teachers.⁶⁷ Salaries of City teachers were fixed on the basis of the "grade work" to be done, and "irrespective of who or what teachers might be assigned to the several positions."

⁶⁶"Minutes," 1909-1913, p. 123.

⁶⁷"Minutes," 1904-1909, op. cit., p. 245.

For the 1904-05 school session, salaries of primary teachers were fixed at fifty-five dollars per month, fourth- and fifth-grade teachers received sixty dollars, sixth- and seventh-grade teachers received sixty-five dollars, and teachers of high school grades earned seventy-five dollars.⁶⁸

Each year the Board empowered the superintendent to transfer teachers "where such may be beneficial to the schools, provided such transfer shall not operate to decrease the pay of the teacher." In addition, the Board reserved the right to discharge any teacher at the end of any month, at the will of the Board.⁶⁹

On July 12, 1905, the Board approved Murphy's recommendation to compute salaries on a sliding scale, "under which teachers will be subject to promotion or demotion as they progress in their work."⁷⁰ The scale then became applicable for only new teachers, however. The effect that Murphy felt this measure might have is reflected in the following statement from his annual report to the State Superintendent of Education in 1910:

What I regard as a forward step, so far as our country schools are concerned, is the sliding scale of salaries now in force in these schools. Inexperienced teachers begin at a monthly salary

⁶⁸"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 240.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 244.

⁷⁰"Minutes," 1904-1909, op. cit., p. 26.

of two and one-half dollars per month until the maximum of sixty-five dollars is reached, all increases being based on efficiency. While this increase seems small, I am of the opinion that it will stimulate teachers to greater effort and at the same time lessen the desire for promotion to our city schools.⁷¹

By 1912, teachers were receiving a beginning salary of fifty-three dollars per month, and a yearly increase of five per cent (if recommended by the superintendent) until a maximum of seventy-three dollars and fifty cents per month was reached.⁷²

Despite the desire of the Board to allocate all possible funds to teachers' salaries, salary increases never kept pace with the increased cost of living. Deficits increased each year, and it became more and more difficult to implement approved annual salary increases.⁷³ By 1918, however, due to a two-mill tax increase, the Board was able to " earmark " seventy-seven per cent of the 1918-19 budget for teachers' salaries. As a result of the increased revenue, the Board was able to approve a salary increase according to the following formula:

⁷¹Annual Report, 1910, op. cit., p. 98.

⁷²By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board, 1912, op. cit., p. 36.

⁷³"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 276.

<u>Salary Category</u>	<u>Per Cent Increase</u>
Less than \$600	10%
\$601 to \$800	7 1/2%
\$801 to \$1000	5%
\$1001 to \$1500	2 1/2% ⁷⁴

The following year, on May 26, 1919, the Board revised its salary schedule to allow for yearly increases rather than periodic raises. The new schedule provided for minimum and maximum salaries based on experience and grade of certificate as shown here:

<u>Grade of Certificate</u>	<u>Length of Service in Mobile System</u>	<u>Minimum</u>		<u>Maximum</u>	
		<u>White</u>	<u>Negro</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Negro</u>
A	Eight Years	\$60.00	\$32.50	\$100.00	\$45.00
B	Ten Years	\$60.00	\$32.50	\$ 87.00	\$40.00
C	Five Years	\$60.00	\$32.50	\$ 66.00	\$35.00

At the request of the Mobile Teachers' Association in 1920, an additional increase in salaries was approved, this time in the amount of fourteen per cent.⁷⁵

Married Women Teachers

Although Board Minutes indicate that consideration was given to the employment of married women teachers, there is no record that any were actually employed prior to 1917. The regulation that married teachers would not be employed

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 275.

⁷⁵"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 328.

"in any of the schools, city or county" apparently was strictly enforced. A female teacher who married while under contract with the Board annulled her contract.⁷⁶

On numerous occasions, Murphy had expressed disapproval of the employment of married women, his reasons bearing on the conflict of interest between home duties and school duties. He felt that the "first thought of a devoted mother would, and should, be given to her home."⁷⁷

During and following World War I, there developed an acute shortage of teachers, and, in 1918, Murphy was compelled to recommend suspension of the regulation relating to the employment of married women for only the duration of the emergency.⁷⁸

When the Board considered the question of continuing to employ married women teachers, Murphy maintained his earlier position, but stated that, "the point in favor of continuing this policy [of hiring married women] is the intimate knowledge of child life possessed by married women." Because he felt that "it would be ungrateful to fail to continue in service those married women who came to the rescue of the schools in the time of an emergency," he recommended

⁷⁶By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board, 1912, op. cit., p. 35.

⁷⁷"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., 313.

⁷⁸"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 252.

that those who were then teaching, rendering satisfactory service, and legally qualified be continued in service.⁷⁹

The question of married women was finally resolved in 1923 when the Board adopted the following resolution:

Be it resolved, that persons of both sexes, both married and single, are equally eligible for employment as teachers and for other like positions in the Mobile Public Schools. No person shall be disqualified from teaching solely on account of being married, nor favored solely because unmarried; nor shall any woman be deemed to have lost her right to teach, nor have her standing as a teacher lowered, solely because she marries during the term of her employment as a teacher; provided, however, that any time any teacher or other employee ceases to perform satisfactory service, such teacher or employee may be discharged by the Superintendent, with the approval of the Board, subject always to an appeal to the Board by such teacher or employee.

All rules and parts of rules in conflict herewith are hereby abrogated.⁸⁰

III. CURRICULUM AND SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

In 1853, Mr. Willis G. Clark, Chairman of the School Committee to whom was entrusted the executive management of the schools, visited schools in New York, Boston, and other Northern cities. Consequently, many excellent features of Northern schools were modified and inaugurated in the Mobile Public School System.⁸¹ The reorganization of Barton Acad-

⁷⁹"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 313.

⁸⁰"Minutes," 1922-1926, op. cit., p. 25.

⁸¹Bureau of Educational Research, Cooperative Study of the Mobile Public Schools, Vol. V. (College of Education, University of Alabama, 1959), p. xviii.

emy in 1854, from the three-grade system, primary, grammar, and high, to primary, intermediate, grammar and Latin [High School], reflected the New England influence on the Mobile System. By 1900, however, school organization had reverted to the three-grade pattern used in the beginning.

Course of Study

Although the curriculum of the schools evolved over a long period of time, the course of study in 1900 varied little from the comprehensive, classical program required in 1854. The curricula of the several levels of schools were as follows:

Primary (Grades One, Two, and Three)

Orthography	Writing
Geography	Gymnastics
Reading	Arithmetic
Music	Drawing

Grammar (Grades Four through Seven)

Orthography	Grammar
Reading	United States History
Writing	Drawing
Arithmetic	Music
Geography	Gymnastics

High School (Grades Eight through Eleven)

Algebra	Rhetoric or English
Physiology	Literature
General History	Physical Geography
Civil Government	Geometry
Chemistry	Botany and Natural
Trigonometry	History
Latin	Astronomy
Logic	Geology

Music
Greek

Drawing
Psychology⁸²

Pupils were required to pass thorough examinations for admission to grammar or high schools if they had not "passed regularly" through the prescribed courses in the Primary and Grammar departments. Upon completion of a selected high school course, pupils were awarded diplomas if a grade of seventy per cent was made on an examination in each course selected.⁸³

In reporting "existing conditions of the schools," at the end of his first year as superintendent, Murphy stated that "the work of the schools was conducted on the basis which had been so wisely chosen by my predecessor, and little occurred during the year to cause any marked deviation from plans already laid out." However, as he made "such suggestions for the further improvement of the schools," he pointed to the need for manual training as a new offering, upgrading in drawing, music, and physical training, and the establishment of kindergartens.⁸⁴ Commissioner Hines had moved that "the curriculum offered by the superintendent was in line with modern education, and

⁸²"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1887-1898, p. 241.

⁸³Ibid., p. 240.

⁸⁴"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 104.

that the Board was in line with the superintendent,"⁸⁵ and the aforementioned recommendations were gradually incorporated in the curriculum. Upon the urging of Yerby for commercial work, stenography had been included on a half-time basis, but "guided largely by the superintendent" [Murphy] the Board in 1902, changed the assignment of the stenography teacher from half-time to full time.⁸⁶ French and German were added to the curriculum in 1907.⁸⁷

The Board approved a dual course of study in 1901, when it moved that "classical and commercial be made separate and distinct, and that pupils in those courses be not placed in competition with each other for honor."⁸⁸

The development which followed, not only more clearly delineated the commercial and "classical" course, but effected the development of six clearly defined courses. "It may be of interest to you and the public," said Murphy in 1911, "to know that the following courses are now offered students of high school: General, Teachers' preparatory, Vocational (two year), Commercial, College preparatory (General), Technical Preparatory and College Preparatory (Classical)." He then pointed out that:

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 97.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 137.

⁸⁷"Minutes," 1904-1909, op. cit., p. 39.

⁸⁸"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 97.

...an opportunity is afforded pupils to pursue the course that will best fit them for the work which they propose to follow after leaving the high school.⁸⁹

Except for the deletion of the "classical" college preparatory course, the aforementioned courses continued to be offered throughout the remainder of Murphy's tenure. The program of studies included in the six courses is outlined below. The numeral in parentheses, following the course name, refers to the credit value of the subject. One credit was valued at one-half of a unit. A minimum of eight credits, or four units per year, was required of all pupils. Thirty-two credits, or sixteen units, were required of all graduates.

⁸⁹"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 190.

GENERAL COURSE*

Year	First Semester		Second Semester	
1st.	Composition	(1)	Composition	(1)
	Civics	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Vocations	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	General Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)	General Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Mathematics (Algebra), or	(1)	Mathematics	(1)
	Commercial Arithmetic or		Electives	(1)
	Household Arithmetic			
	Electives	(1)		
2nd.	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Hygiene	($\frac{1}{2}$)	History	(1)
	History (European to 1700)	(1)	Electives	(2 $\frac{1}{2}$)
3rd.	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	History (European fr. 1700)	(1)	History	(1)
	Electives	(2 $\frac{1}{2}$)	Electives	(2 $\frac{1}{2}$)
4th.	Literature	(1)	Literature	(1)
	History (American)	(1)	History	(1)
	Electives	(2 $\frac{1}{2}$)	Electives	(2 $\frac{1}{2}$)

COMMERCIAL COURSE*

Year	First Semester		Second Semester	
1st.	Composition	(1)	Composition	(1)
	Civics	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Study of Vocations	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	General Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)	General Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Commercial Arithmetic	(1)	Commercial Arithmetic	(1)
	Spanish	(1)	Spanish	(1)
	Electives	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Electives	($\frac{1}{2}$)
2nd.	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Spanish	(1)	Spanish	(1)
	Hygiene	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Hygiene	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Bookkeeping	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Bookkeeping	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Commercial Geography	(1)	Commercial Geography	(1)
	Penmanship	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Penmanship	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Electives	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Electives	($\frac{1}{2}$)
3rd.	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Commerce	(1)	Commerce	(1)
	Typewriting	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Typewriting	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Spanish	(1)	Spanish	(1)
	Penmanship	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Penmanship	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Electives	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Electives	($\frac{1}{2}$)
4th.	Literature	(1)	Literature	(1)
	Economics and Civics	(1)	History	(1)
	History	(1)	Economics and Civics	(1)
	Electives	(1) or ($\frac{1}{2}$)	Electives	(1) or ($\frac{1}{2}$)

HOME ECONOMICS*

Year	First Semester		Second Semester	
1st.	Composition	(1)	Composition	(1)
	Civics	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Study of Vocations	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	General Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)	General Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Domestic Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Domestic Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Household Arithmetic	(1)	Household Arithmetic	(1)
	Freehand Drawing	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Freehand Drawing	($\frac{1}{2}$)
2nd.	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Hygiene	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Hygiene	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Domestic Art	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Domestic Art	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Art Drawing	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Art Drawing	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Electives	(2)	Electives	(2)
3rd.	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Chemistry	(1)	Chemistry	(1)
	Domestic Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Domestic Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Electives	(2) or ($1\frac{1}{2}$)	Electives	(2) or ($1\frac{1}{2}$)
4th.	Literature	(1)	Literature	(1)
	Biology	(1)	Biology	(1)
	Domestic Art	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Domestic Art	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	History	(1)	History	(1)
	Electives	($\frac{1}{2}$) or (1)	Electives	($\frac{1}{2}$) or (1)

MANUAL TRAINING*

Year	First Semester		Second Semester
1st.	Composition	(1)	Composition (1)
	Civics	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Study of Vocations ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	General Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)	General Science ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Mechanical Drawing	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Mechanical Drawing ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Manual Training	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Manual Training ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Mathematics or Commercial Arithmetic	(1)	Mathematics or Commercial Arithmetic (1)
2nd.	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Composition ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Literature ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Hygiene	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Hygiene ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Mechanical Drawing	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Mechanical Drawing ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Manual Training	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Manual Training ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Mathematics	(1)	Mathematics (1)
	Electives	(1)	Electives (1)
3rd.	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Composition ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Literature ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Physics or Mathematics	(1)	Physics or Mathematics (1)
	Mechanical Drawing	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Mechanical Drawing ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Electives	(2) or ($1\frac{1}{2}$)	Electives (2) or ($1\frac{1}{2}$)
4th.	Literature	(1)	Literature (1)
	Physics (unless taken)	(1)	Physics (unless taken) (1)
	History	(1)	History (1)
	Electives	(1) or ($1\frac{1}{2}$) or (2) or ($2\frac{1}{2}$)	Electives (1) or ($1\frac{1}{2}$) or (2) or ($2\frac{1}{2}$)
	(if Physics has been taken)		(if Physics has been taken)

TEACHERS*

Year	First Semester		Second Semester
1st.	Composition	(1)	Composition (1)
	Civics	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Study of Vocations ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	General Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)	General Science ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Mathematics	(1)	Mathematics (1)
	Electives	(1)	Electives (1)
2nd.	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Composition ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Literature ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Hygiene	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Hygiene ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	History	(1)	History (1)
	Mathematics	(1)	Mathematics (1)
	Electives	(1)	Electives (1)
3rd.	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Composition ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Literature ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	History	(1)	History (1)
	Physics or Biology	(1)	Physics or Biology (1)
	Education	(1)	Education (1)
	(Introduction)		(Introduction)
	Electives	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Electives ($\frac{1}{2}$)
4th.	Literature	(1)	Literature (1)
	History	(1)	History (1)
	Education	(1)	Education (1)
	Education	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Education ($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Review	(1)	Review (1)

COLLEGE PREPARATORY*

Year	First Semester		Second Semester	
1st.	Composition	(1)	Composition	(1)
	Civics	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Study of Vocations	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	General Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)	General Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Mathematics	(1)	Mathematics	(1)
	Latin	(1)	Latin	(1)
2nd.	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Hygiene	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Hygiene	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	History	(1)	History	(1)
	Latin	(1)	Latin	(1)
	Mathematics	(1)	Mathematics	(1)
3rd.	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Composition	($\frac{1}{2}$)
	History or French	(1)	History or French	(1)
	Latin	(1)	Latin	(1)
	Mathematics	(1)	Mathematics	(1)
4th.	Literature	(1)	Literature	(1)
	History or French	(1)	History or French	(1)
	Latin	(1)	Latin	(1)
	Physics	(1)	Physics	(1)

ELECTIVE COURSES*

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First Year

Latin	(1)	Commercial Arithmetic	(1)
French	(1)	Freehand Drawing	($\frac{1}{2}$)
Spanish	(1)	Chorus	($\frac{1}{4}$)
Mathematics (Algebra)	(1)	Applied Music	(1)

Second Year

Literature	($\frac{1}{2}$)	Commercial Geography	(1)
History (European to 1700)	(1)	Domestic Art	($\frac{1}{2}$)
Latin	(1)	Art Drawing	($\frac{1}{2}$)
French	(1)	Mechanical Drawing	($\frac{1}{2}$)
Spanish	(1)	Manual Training	($\frac{1}{2}$)
Latin	(1)	Chorus	($\frac{1}{4}$)
Mathematics (Plane Geometry)	(1)	Applied Music	(1)
Bookkeeping	($\frac{1}{2}$)		

Third Year

History (European from 1700)-	(1)	Chemistry	(1)
Latin	(1)	Bookkeeping	(1)
French	(1)	Commerce	(1)
Spanish	(1)	Stenography	(1)
Mathematics (Quadratics)	(1)	Typewriting	($\frac{1}{2}$)
Physics	(1)	Domestic Science	($\frac{1}{2}$)
Biology	(1)	Mechanical Drawing	($\frac{1}{2}$)
Chorus	($\frac{1}{4}$)	Education	(1)
Applied Music	(1)		

Fourth Year

History (American)	(1)	Chemistry	(1)
Economics	(1)	Bookkeeping	($\frac{1}{2}$)
Latin	(1)	Stenography	(1)
French	(1)	Typewriting	(1)
Spanish	(1)	Domestic Art	($\frac{1}{2}$)
Mathematics (Solid Geometry or Trigonometry)	(1)	Chorus	($\frac{1}{4}$)
		Applied Music	(1)
Physics	(1)		
Biology	(1)		

*Announcement in The Barton News, April, 1919.

Preschool Education

The first kindergarten in Mobile was established in the Fall of 1901 on the lower floor of the Girls' School housed in Barton Academy. Five hundred dollars was appropriated by the Board for repairs, new furniture, and necessary apparatus. Children of five and six years of age only, were admitted on a "first come first served" basis.⁹⁰ The decision to establish this method for the improvement of the primary department was made in the Board meeting on May 7, 1901. Dr. H. McCormick, secretary of the National Anthropological Society, Gaithersburg, Maryland, addressed the Board on the necessity of educating the senses of the child in the earlier years of life rather than the mentality. He discussed kindergarten methods which had been amply proved and suggested that a kindergarten school be established in Mobile with an experienced kindergartener at the head of it.⁹¹ Commenting on this venture in his first annual report to the Board in 1901, Murphy stated:

The preliminaries for the beginning of this work when school opens, have been about completed, and this department will be launched upon what is yet a field of experiment in this city. From the evidence gained from other sources where kindergarten work has been tried, we have every reason to believe that it will be a success.⁹²

⁹⁰"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 97.

⁹¹News item in The Daily Register [Mobile], May 8, 1901.

⁹²"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 104.

Kindergartens grew in favor with the people and became one of the most popular departments of the schools.⁹³ In 1903, additional kindergartens were opened at the Jefferson Street and West Ward Schools, each with a staff of two teachers. The former was a school near the present location of Russell School. West Ward is now Northside Elementary School. By 1910, the number of kindergartens had grown to six. However, the maximum number during Murphy's administration was nine.

Kindergarten advisory board. On September 12, 1912, a Kindergarten Advisory Board was approved, to which were appointed Messrs. Erwin Craighead, W. K. Kinscott, and L. H. Metzger. The purpose of the group was "to serve in connection with the kindergarten work and training."⁹⁴ This group of citizens made regular visits to classes and prepared monthly reports to the Board which showed the status of the kindergarten program.

Financing kindergarten classes. At the time the first classes were implemented, they were supported with State and County funds as were regular classes; however, in 1908, the Board concluded that "they had no legal right to employ for this purpose state and county funds left avail-

⁹³"Minutes," 1904-1909, op. cit., p. 121.

⁹⁴"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 287.

able."⁹⁵ Kindergartens were thereafter maintained during Murphy's tenure by charging tuition fees, and were continually threatened with abolishment due to lack of funds. In 1912, because of his concern that many children of kindergarten age were unable to attend school on account of the tuition fee, Murphy proposed a plan to reduce the fee by employing a principal and a musician, rather than the principal and an assisting teacher as had been the practice. This would have the effect of an annual saving of \$2,280.00. Although there is no record of formal adoption of the plan by the Board, the seven kindergartens authorized by the Board for the 1912-13 school year were staffed by only principals and musicians.⁹⁶

Teachers. Murphy believed that kindergartens should not be "mere nurseries where children were amused;" rather, the true purpose should be to put the young child in the possession of his faculties, cultivate his senses, begin the study of nature, learn to respect the rights of others, and to enter primary school with an understanding of his natural surroundings and capabilities."⁹⁷ He believed that the kindergarten teacher should be a person of good general education

⁹⁵"Minutes," 1904-1909, op. cit., p. 121.

⁹⁶"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 287.

⁹⁷"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 203.

with special training, and unless proper care was exercised in the selection of teachers, the kindergarten would "fail of its purpose."⁹⁸

Minutes of the Board show that Miss Virginia Fairfax, who had been assigned as director of the first kindergarten class, was granted a leave of absence in 1903 to study kindergarten methods in Boston and Washington.

Upon Murphy's recommendation, the Board established a Kindergarten Training School for young ladies desiring to prepare themselves for kindergarten teaching. He further proposed that a tuition fee of \$25.00 be charged for the two-year course. He also proposed that a director be employed to take charge of the school, to give close supervision to the seven kindergartens, and to "bring the work of these schools into closer union with the primary schools."⁹⁹ On September 9, 1912, Miss Elizabeth Johnson was appointed the first supervisor of kindergartens, at which time the tuition fee for the Training School was fixed at \$25.00, payable semi-annually in October and February.¹⁰⁰

Applicants for kindergarten work were required to be graduates of standard high schools or give evidence of equal qualification. "Seven young ladies" successfully completed

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 278.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

the first two-year course and received diplomas on May 27, 1914.¹⁰¹

Murphy's concern for "proper management" of kindergartens was expressed again in 1922, when he stated that "we have in our employ certain kindergarten teachers who hold neither a certificate nor a diploma from a recognized training school." He recommended that they be required to obtain certification before being re-employed.¹⁰²

Evening Classes

Radio classes. To fill the demand for radio instruction for men subject to the draft, Murphy arranged to begin such classes on March 25, 1918. These classes were held six evenings per week to meet the needs of the Signal Corps. One-half the cost was provided by the United States Government under the Smith-Hughes Act.¹⁰³

Alien night school. Murphy reported, in 1924, that evening classes were held to prepare aliens for citizenship. The classes were held from March to May and met three nights per week for two hours per night. The expense of the classes was borne jointly by the Lions Club and the Division of Exceptional Education of the State Department of Education. It

¹⁰¹"Minutes," 1913-1916, op. cit., p. 101.

¹⁰²"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 313.

¹⁰³"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 221.

was inaugurated at the request of the United States Government.¹⁰⁴

Vocational evening classes. Evening trade classes which were organized in 1924 under the Smith-Hughes Act, included auto-mechanics, painting, blue-print reading and shop mathematics, and mechanical drawing.¹⁰⁵

Bible Reading

"In order to impress on the minds of all connected with the Public Schools their entire dependence on God, and their duty of acknowledging Him in all ways," teachers from the beginning of the Mobile Public School System had been required to open their classes in the morning by reading a portion of Scripture and prayer.¹⁰⁶ However, the practice of opening school with scripture-reading seems to have been discontinued, as no reference is made to it during Murphy's tenure until 1919. Following the passage of an Act of the Legislature in 1919, which provided for compulsory reading of the Bible in public schools, Murphy instructed teachers to read selections daily from both the Old and New Testament.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ "Minutes," 1922-1926, op. cit., p. 241.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Organization of the Board, 1854, op. cit., p. 108.

¹⁰⁷ "Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 24.

Desegregation of all-boy, all-girl schools

The Board of School Commissioners had early followed the practice of maintaining separate classes for boys and girls above the grammar school level. Yerby had recommended consolidating the Boys' and Girls' High Schools in 1898 to reduce expenses, but no action was taken.¹⁰⁸ Murphy had long advocated discontinuing all-boy, all-girl schools to provide a more flexible curriculum, but he felt that a sympathetic principal would be needed before making such a recommendation.¹⁰⁹ Consequently, with the appointment of Dr. Lee Byrne as principal, in 1911, the combining of the two high schools was accomplished, the results of which are described in the following report:

The combining of your two high schools under one management necessitated considerable rearrangement of classes--separate classes for boys and girls have been maintained as far as possible, but in some instances it was found necessary to have mixed classes. No serious objections have been offered to this arrangement, and where there was objection, the wishes of the parents have been respected. The courses in the High School have been made much more flexible, and with the increased number of courses as now offered, it would make the maintenance of two separate departments quite expensive--necessitating two distinct faculties.¹¹⁰

Summer Schools

Board Minutes carry references to schools which were

¹⁰⁸ "Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 405.

¹⁰⁹ Mrs. S. S. Murphy, personal interview, May 14, 1965.

¹¹⁰ "Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 189.

in session during summer months prior to 1900, but there seems to be no reference to summer schools which extended the regular school year until 1902, when the names of both white and Negro summer school teachers were listed.¹¹¹ By 1910, the summer school at Barton was maintained in connection with the Teacher Training School, and aside from furnishing training for teachers, gave opportunities to pupils to make up lost time, review work of the previous year, adjust irregularities due to transfer from another system, and to give advance work in the grade to which the pupil was promoted.¹¹²

Grading of Pupil Achievement

Prior to 1900, both numerical and letter grades were used to report pupil progress to parents on a regular basis. In 1900, however, the Board abolished the letter grade system in use at that time, and directed Murphy to "work out the details and class and record books to be provided by the Board," and again adopted a numerical system with grades to be reported in percentage.¹¹³ The procedure of passing pupils on the basis of a grade of 70, was followed until the 1918-1919 school session, at which time the letter-grade

¹¹¹"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 139.

¹¹²By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board, 1912, op. cit., p. 29.

¹¹³"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 79.

system was reinstated.

No reference to a change in the grading system is recorded in Minutes of the Board prior to the 1918-19 session, but it might be assumed that such a recommendation was included in reports of The Educational Survey which the Board authorized in 1916. The report of the Survey does not seem to have been preserved and portions of it, which are recorded in the Minutes, are sparse.

Beginning again, with the 1918-1919 session, the use of letter grades was the order of the day. In the scale of values, as was indicated on the revised report cards, E, as "Excellent" indicated satisfactory attainment; G, as "Good" showed commendable results; F, or "Fair," indicated passing work without commendation; U, or "Unsatisfactory," and V.P., as "Very Poor," indicated work below standard, and made promotion doubtful.

IV. HOUSING

One hundred and one schools are listed as being in operation during the school session 1900-1901. Thirteen were located in the City limits and eighty-eight in the County. Barton Academy housed grades one to eleven and was organized in departments which included primary, intermediate, junior-grammar, senior-grammar, and high school. Additional elementary schools in the city included Orange Grove, West Ward, Jackson Street Intermediate for white pupils; and Augusta

Street, Davis Avenue, and Orange Grove for Negro pupils. Broad Street Academy accommodated Negro pupils above the seventh grade.¹¹⁴

Sixty-eight of the eighty-eight white and Negro rural schools were one-teacher schools and twenty were two- or three-teacher schools. No rural schools included high school grades. White pupils who desired to advance beyond the seventh grade were compelled to attend Barton Academy, and Negro pupils, the Broad Street Academy.

Development of Physical Facilities

By 1926, the average daily attendance had increased to 15,316 as compared to 5,480 in 1900, and the Board was continuously plagued with the problem of lack of funds along with the continuing increase in pupil population. Murphy reported in 1911 that the deficit in the budget was due to the heavy expense incurred in the erection of school buildings. Yet he continually expressed strong belief in providing the most adequate housing, as is seen in his following statement:

After all that may be said, it cannot be denied that a first class school plant is expensive, and if the citizens expect much, then ample revenue must be provided. When you consider the fact that a large part of the life of the average child between the ages of six and eighteen years is spent in the school room, we should be not only ready but glad to provide the most comfortable buildings with the most sanitary surroundings. Therefore, I do not think that you could be charged with the useless ex-

penditure of money so long as it is spent to add to the physical comforts of the child.¹¹⁵

Although the amount of housing never caught up with the need, there was continuous remodeling, construction of new facilities, and consolidation. In reporting on the status of physical facilities in 1918, Murphy stated that the value of school property was one million dollars,¹¹⁶ an amount which takes on significance when compared with the amount of twenty-one thousand dollars reported in 1904.¹¹⁷ The progress made in providing housing from 1914 to 1918 was reviewed in his following statement:

Within the past four years, three grade buildings have been erected, and the high school building remodeled. It was presumed that this would provide adequate buildings for some time, but the growth of the city within the past twelve months has been such that our school accommodations by no means meet our present needs; additional school buildings will be a necessity if the school population is to be cared for properly. School accommodations have not been overlooked in rural districts. Within the past eighteen months, approximately one hundred seventy-five thousand dollars has been expended for school buildings outside the city limits. While the buildings erected do not fully meet the needs of all rural communities, it has greatly improved conditions, and all of the principal centers are well provided with buildings and equipment.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 124.

¹¹⁶Mobile, the Model City, op. cit., p. 14.

¹¹⁷Department of Education of the State of Alabama, Biennial Report for the Scholastic Year Ending September 30, 1903 and 1904 (Montgomery: The Rogers Printing Company, 1905), p. 226.

¹¹⁸Mobile, the Model City, op. cit., p. 14.

Some of the more noteworthy building projects which were carried on by 1918 included the Russell, Oakdale, Old Shell Road, and Raphael Semmes Elementary Schools, and the remodeling of Barton Academy. In addition, by drawing on funds made available by issuance of bonds authorized by the Rural School Act, schools had been constructed in the following rural communities:

White Schools

Location	Number of Rooms
Crichton	12
Whistler	8
Bayou La Batre	8
Theodore	4
Semmes	4
Wilmer	4
Barker Cotton Mills	4
Fellowship	1
Heron Bay	1

Negro Schools

Location	Number of Rooms
Plateau	8
Mauvilla	2119

The sharp increase in enrollment during the 1918-1919 school session, caused in part by the enforcement of the compulsory attendance law, came concurrently with a shortage of building materials due to the exigencies of World War I. Consequently, construction activities were temporarily curtailed

¹¹⁹"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 265.

and crowded conditions relieved through the use of church buildings, the remodeling of basements,¹²⁰ and the construction of portable classrooms.¹²¹

Following the war period, when funds and materials were again available, the race to catch up with the mounting pupil population resumed. A statement which Murphy submitted in 1921 shows an estimate of \$178,310.00 for construction and repairs during the school session 1920-1921, sixty-three per cent of which was for projects in the County, and thirty-seven per cent for the City.¹²²

Some significance might be attached to Murphy's report in 1922, when he submitted a statement showing the most urgent building needs which included white elementary schools in the Oakdale and Loop communities, and two high schools in the City, one for Negro pupils and one for white.¹²³ The aforementioned schools when later named served as memorials to three whose lives were marked by devotion and dedicated service in the cause of education, namely, Ben C. Woodcock, Paul Laurence Dunbar...and Samuel Silenus Murphy.

Although the growth of the system may not be measured only in terms of bricks and budget, the comparative value of

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 284.

¹²¹"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 9.

¹²²Ibid., p. 270.

¹²³"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 325.

buildings and sites and other equipment may give some indication of the physical facilities which were constructed during Murphy's tenure. These available data are shown in Table II.

Consolidation

In order to maintain adequate facilities for the education of children and youth, it is sometimes necessary to consolidate small schools into larger units. Prior to 1908, when the Board began consolidating schools, classes were simply discontinued when the average attendance became lower than ten pupils. In a borderline case, Murphy allowed the class to continue if the cost per pupil did not exceed five dollars per month.¹²⁴

Many factors influence decisions to consolidate and all should be weighed carefully before children are uprooted from their communities and transplanted long distances to strange surroundings. Murphy's concern that consolidation be effected only after careful planning is shown in 1908 when the Board passed its first recorded motion to combine the Cypress Creek, Union, and Hamilton No. 2 Schools. At this point he requested that the Board defer the motion "until the sentiment of the patrons is united for consolidation."¹²⁵

¹²⁴"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 215.

¹²⁵"Minutes," 1904-1909, op. cit., p. 165.

TABLE II*

VALUE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY DURING MURPHY'S TENURE,
1900-26

Year	Value of Buildings and Sites	Value of Equipment	Total Value
1900-1901	-	-	-
1905-1906	-	-	\$ 137,000
1910-1911	\$ 348,000	\$ 42,400	\$ 390,400
1915-1916	\$ 523,085	\$ 31,420	\$ 554,505
1920-1921	\$ 821,675	\$ 87,035	\$ 908,710
1925-1926	\$2,278,075	\$194,769	\$2,472,844

*Based on data contained in Annual Reports of the Department of Education of the State of Alabama from 1900 to 1926.

In his annual report in 1910 Murphy stated that the first attempt at consolidation had been made, "having combined three schools about four miles apart into one central school, well housed and equipped."¹²⁶ He further said that it was done with the full knowledge and consent of the parents, stating: "I feel confident that no friction will arise on account of the discontinuance of the smaller schools and I believe that the people are beginning to realize what we need is fewer and better schools."¹²⁷

By 1918 the policy of the Board relative to consolidating schools was reported by the President of the Board to have been "faithfully carried out." That it had become a firmly entrenched practice is seen in his summary statement:

The policy of having one central school and transporting pupils to this school is not intended to reduce the cost as [much as] to increase the efficiency of the schools. A teacher in a consolidated and graded school, with one grade to teach, can render greater service to the child than she can if attempting to teach all the grades in a one-room country school.

The idea of consolidating and transporting has grown in favor from year to year in all sections of our country until it is today the recognized policy in all states where rural schools are under progressive management.¹²⁸

¹²⁶Department of Education of Alabama, Annual Report, 1910, op. cit., p. 165.

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 272.

Murphy's influence in consolidating schools may be seen in the following excerpt of the editorial carried in Educational Exchange, official organ of the Alabama Educator's Association:

Mobile County has been for some time experimenting upon consolidating schools with transportation at public expense. It is growing in popularity of the patrons. We would not be surprised if as a result in the not too distant future a scheme for consolidating the schools of the entire county into appropriate centers were to be consummated.

Superintendent S. S. Murphy deserves great credit for the success of the work in Mobile County.¹²⁹

Medical College Building:

The Medical College of Alabama was established in Mobile in 1859 due to the efforts of a galaxy of accomplished Mobile physicians. It had an auspicious beginning and a commodious building was erected on Saint Anthony Street, between Lawrence and Cedar Streets. During the Civil War, the students and most of the faculty rushed off to war, and it was not reopened again until after the war.¹³⁰

In 1920, Murphy learned that the Medical College was to be moved from Mobile, and initiated contacts with the University of Alabama Board of Trustees in an effort to secure

¹²⁹ Editorial in Educational Exchange, June, 1916.

¹³⁰ Albert Burton Moore, History of Alabama and Her People (Chicago: The American Historical Society, 1927), Vol. I., p. 344.

the building for school purposes.¹³¹

He reported on September 28, 1921, that the deed to the building had been received, but due to the controversy over the purpose of the building, it was not actually used until November of 1922. At this time, Negro pupils from the over-crowded Owens School were moved into the college facility, which was located in a predominately white neighborhood.¹³²

Barton Academy

If the germ of the Mobile System is to be found in an Act of the Legislature approved in 1826, as Murphy stated,¹³³ it may be said that the fruit of the plant was Barton Academy. In fact, the history of public education in Mobile County may be reviewed in the story of the Barton building.

The first Board of School Commissioners commenced the construction of the building in 1835, but to secure sufficient funds for its completion, the State Legislature in 1836 authorized Mobile to raise by lottery, any sum not exceeding fifty thousand dollars.

The building site, located on the north side of Government Street between Cedar and Lawrence was purchased in 1830,

¹³¹"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 90.

¹³²"Minutes," 1922-1926, op. cit., p. 406.

¹³³Mobile, the Model City, op. cit., p. 9.

primarily due to the efforts of Henry Hitchcock and Silas Dinsmore. Willoughby Barton, for whom the building is named, was credited with drawing the Bill which created the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County.¹³⁴

Dubose stated that, "no doors in the City of Mobile have opened to so many young people as the doors of Barton Academy,¹³⁵ and by the time Murphy migrated to Mobile, generations of Mobilians had passed through its doors.

Peter Hamilton referred to the edifice as being "chaste, substantial and classically lovely."¹³⁶ Craighead described it as a quasi-Greek structure of three stories surmounted by a lofty dome resting upon a drum of columns. "No ornamentation," he said, "breaks the rather severe rectangular outer walls of the first story, but above the entrance there is a partice from which arise fluted columns extending past the third floor and supporting the pediment with Ionic capitale." He further described the cupola surrounded by smaller columns which crowns the edifice, and the upright spears which encompass the lot to form a hand-

¹³⁴ Willis G. Clark, Memorial Record of Alabama (Madison, Wisconsin: Brant and Fuller, 1893), Vol. I., p. 9.

¹³⁵ Joel C. Dubose, Alabama History (Richmond: B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, 1908), p. 229.

¹³⁶ Peter J. Hamilton, Mobile of the Five Flags (Mobile: The Gill Printing Company, 1931), p. 254.

some iron fence.¹³⁷

Murphy had recommended remodeling the Barton building in 1903,¹³⁸ but it was not until 1914 that an extensive remodeling project was approved to make room for additional pupils and to adapt the building to the special needs of secondary education.¹³⁹ Facilities which were available when remodeling was completed included rooms for physics-chemistry, biology, science, bookkeeping, stenography, typewriting, sewing, cooking, manual training, mechanical and freehand drawing, library, and assembly. Also were included a lunch-room, locker rooms, high school offices, and offices for the Superintendent and Board.¹⁴⁰

Despite the improved classrooms, the ever-mounting enrollment kept the High School from being a wholly adequate facility. By 1922, Barton housed one hundred and twenty classes exceeding thirty pupils, and put the school in jeopardy in meeting the requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. This concern seems to have motivated the Board to proceed actively with plans to construct a new high school building.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷Erwin Craighead, From Mobile's Past (Mobile: The Powers Printing Company, 1925), p. 331.

¹³⁸"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 203.

¹³⁹Mobile, the Model City, op. cit., p. 15.

¹⁴⁰"Minutes," 1913-1916, op. cit., p. 57.

¹⁴¹"Minutes," 1922-1926, op. cit., p. 306.

When Barton students were transferred to the new high school on Carlen Street in 1926, seventh-grade pupils from over-crowded elementary schools were assigned to replace them. Thus, Barton established a new precedent by being the first junior high school in the system. It was reported that the seventh graders were ecstatic and awed by the opportunity to occupy a building which their older brothers and sisters, their parents, and their grandparents had also occupied.¹⁴²

The Million Dollar High School

The Mobile High School, which grew out of the Barton Academy, was the only white high school in the city district during Murphy's tenure. Although many rural schools had high school grades, Murphy noted that each year there were many requests from parents for transfers to attend Barton Academy.¹⁴³ However, he felt that there was no reason why district rural schools should not be equal to Barton Academy in every particular, and advocated that transfer requests be granted sparingly, and only for the best of reasons.

Nevertheless, he admitted that "parents wanted their children to attend the largest and oldest school in the System, or that they felt that the discipline, course of study, and general efficiency of the district schools was [sic] not

¹⁴² News item in The Public School Courier [Mobile], March, 1936.

¹⁴³ "Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 3.

what they should be."¹⁴⁴

In 1911, Murphy reviewed the progress that had been made in providing substantial buildings, and stated that there would never be an end to the housing problem, unless the Board admitted that the city and county had ceased to grow, or that the schools were not up to standard and the populace had sought "educational advantages through other sources."¹⁴⁵

He then pointed to crowded conditions in the High School, and the inadequacy of its facilities. How deeply he felt about this need is shown in his following statement:

It is useless for me to say that your high school building is antiquated, and entirely inadequate for the purposes needed. I regard it as a reflection upon a city of this size to be content with the building as it is now. If there is any marked increase in the enrollment of your High Schools another session, you will of necessity be forced to turn some pupils away, as it is crowded at present, and all available space occupied.

What Mobile stands greatly in need of now is a modern high school, sufficiently large to meet the demands for some years to come, and amply provided with laboratories, and with an auditorium that can be used for all public exercises of a school nature. When you have this, you will only have what the average progressive city the size of Mobile is now enjoying.

It should not be forgotten that the best asset of any city or community is a good system of schools, children comfortably housed, buildings well equip-

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 123.

ped, and pupils provided with the best of teachers.¹⁴⁶

To show how such a school might be financed, Murphy then pointed out that the city council of Birmingham made annual appropriations to construct and maintain their schools from bond elections.

The following August, a special committee which had been appointed to investigate the most feasible method of raising funds for a high school building, reported it did not recommend additional taxation for a high school. However, it did propose that the board attorney draft a bill which would allow the Municipality and the County Commissioners to appropriate out of their revenues, funds sufficient to erect and equip a building.¹⁴⁷

Subsequent planning and arrangements to effect the needed legislation may have accounted for the delay, for twelve years were to elapse before bond elections were held to secure the necessary construction funds for a new high school.

Eventually, in 1923, three hundred and fifty thousand dollar bonds were voted by both the City of Mobile and Mobile County to construct the new high school, and in 1925, when it became apparent that funds raised in this joint effort would be insufficient, the City voted to contribute an additional

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 125.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 129.

two hundred thousand dollars.¹⁴⁸

Minutes of the Board reflect no little controversy relative to the building project, especially in the selection of the site and the architect. Citizens were greatly interested in this, and there was much pressure on the Board from various segments of the community, each expressing a different point of view. The Board seemed to be hopelessly deadlocked until the impasse was resolved when a committee, composed of Rotarians, offered its services as an advisory group.¹⁴⁹ It may be significant, at this point, to note that Murphy had been an active Rotarian for many years.

When construction began, Murphy visited the Carlen Street site daily to observe the progress being made, and frequently expressed pleasure and satisfaction that his efforts to make a modern, comprehensive high school a reality for boys and girls would not have been in vain.¹⁵⁰

On the week-end of April 5, 1926, six weeks before the end of the school session, furniture, books, and other equipment were moved from the Barton building to the new Mobile High School building. Mr. Frank Grove, who then served as principal, stated that because of careful planning and cooperation on the part of the faculty and pupils,

¹⁴⁸"Minutes," 1922-1926, op. cit., p. 412.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p. 143.

¹⁵⁰Mrs. S. S. Murphy, personal interview, May 14, 1965.

"school was in session the following Monday morning."¹⁵¹

Murphy's interest in, and influence on the development of school facilities can be seen in an excerpt from the following editorial written at the time of his death:

The million dollar high school in Mobile, which would be an ornament to a much larger city, is, in part at least, a monument to Mr. Murphy's devotion to the cause of education. The steady improvement in school facilities, new and progressive policies, new ideas in school regimen, sober innovations and practices designed to make schools more attractive, more convenient, more comfortable, more appealing to youth - all these things and many other commanded the thoughtful and helpful attention of Mr. Murphy during his years of service, with the result that he lived to see many wholesome and inspiring changes in the school life of Mobile County.¹⁵²

V. ADMINISTRATION

The School Board

The nine members of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County, who elected Murphy as superintendent in September, 1900, were elected at large by the people of the County for six year terms, with three members retiring every two years. The State of Alabama, by Constitutional provision and by Legislative enactment had made it possible for Mobile County to be organized as two school districts under a single administration. Although the school districts covered the same geographical area as the County, the school

¹⁵¹ Frank Grove, personal interview, August 21, 1965.

¹⁵² Editorial in The Mobile Register, November 5, 1926.

board was not a department of the general City or County governments.¹⁵³ The unique place in the governmental structure, provided by Section 270 of the Constitution has been previously cited.

Regular meetings of the Board were held on the second Wednesday of each month, but special meetings were called when needed; but according to their by-laws, no business was transacted other than that set forth "in the call."¹⁵⁴

Standing committees. From the beginning of the Mobile School System, and throughout Murphy's tenure as superintendent, the Board dealt with administrative matters through such standing committees as the Executive Committee, Committee on Country Schools, Committee on Finance, Committee on School Lands, and Committee on Visiting. A statement of the duties of these committees is presented in Appendices B, C, D, E, and F.

Each committee was composed of three members whose terms lasted for two years. Meetings of the several committees were not held on a scheduled basis; rather, they could be called on request of the majority of their members. They exercised great freedom in formulating rules as long as such regulations did not conflict with the By-laws of the Board.

¹⁵³Cooperative Study, op. cit., p. 1

¹⁵⁴By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board, 1912, op. cit., p. 3.

When committees did meet, a formal, written report was required to be submitted to the Board, signed by the chairman or a majority of the committee.¹⁵⁵

Membership. Although the tenure for which board members were elected was nine years, the periods which they actually served ranged from less than a year to a maximum of ten years, due to resignations, re-elections, and deaths while in office.

Over the years the people of Mobile County had expressed the "high value they had set upon the Public School System," by electing men of devotion and esteem, who had helped build the System through earnest and painstaking efforts. Such renowned and venerable names included Thaddeus Sanford, the first president of the reorganized board, Allen H. Ryland, Dr. Jesse Carter, Charles LeBaron, Charles W. Gazzam, Dr. William H. Anderson, John Hurtel, Daniel C. Sampson, Jones M. Withers, Sidney E. Collins, M. R. Evans, William H. Redwood, Gustavas Horton, Jacob Magee, and Willis G. Clark.¹⁵⁶

The heritage enjoyed by members of the Board, who served during Murphy's tenure, was one marked by differences of opinion and debate. This approach to problem-solving was felt to be desirable rather than detrimental to progress, and Minutes of the Board from 1900 to 1926 seem to indicate

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 4-7.

¹⁵⁶"Minutes," 1887-1898, op. cit., p. 253.

that this attitude continued to prevail.

Reduction in board membership. In the process of devising "new methods for economical and practical operation of the Board," steps were taken on September 9, 1918, to reduce the number of School Commissioners from nine to five, in keeping with a State law governing school boards outside the County of Mobile.¹⁵⁷

At the time that a bill was drafted by the Board for this purpose to present to the Legislature, Murphy reminded the Board that the old law, creating a board of nine members, provided that two members should reside at least six miles from the court house. The intent was to insure a twenty per cent membership of County members. The new bill, drafted by the Board, provided for a forty per cent representation of County members. A new general State law, passed in the 1918 legislative session, provided only for county boards of education of five members, and made no stipulation as to residence. Murphy expressed the opinion that, "it would be a mistake to deprive any man or woman of the right to serve as a board member on account of residence."¹⁵⁸ He further stated that, "the wishes of the electorate of the County should be considered and those receiving the highest number of votes should be declared elected, regardless of resi-

¹⁵⁷ "Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 258.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 352.

dence."¹⁵⁹

The Board apparently heeded his pleas, because the Act, when passed on August 22, 1919, provided for the election of commissioners from the County at large. The Act abolished the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County as it was then constituted, and established a board of five members with the same rights, powers, duties, and privileges. The authority for selecting a new board was vested in the State Superintendent of Education, with the provision that the five-member board be selected from membership of the old board.

The new board was to be divided into three classes: Class I, to consist of two members; Class II, to consist of two members; and Class III, to consist of one member.

On November 19, 1919, Mr. Spright Dowell, State Superintendent of Education for the State of Alabama, stated his selections in the following communication:

This is to inform you officially that in accordance with an Act approved August 22, 1919, I have this day appointed from your number the following to constitute the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County: Class I, John T. Cochran, R. P. Roach; Class II, J. W. Egan, H. A. Forchheimer; and Class III, Elizabeth Fonde.

In making the above appointments, it is understood that the members in Class I shall hold office until the general election in 1920 and until their successors shall have been elected and qualified; that the members of Class II shall hold office until the general election in 1922 and until their

¹⁵⁹
Ibid.

successors shall have been elected and qualified, and the member in Class III until the general election in 1924 and his successor shall have been elected and qualified.¹⁶⁰

Board secretary. Prior to 1891, the superintendent had served as both secretary, treasurer and superintendent. However, on February 5, 1891, in order to relieve the superintendent of clerical duties due to the "large increase of teachers, erection of school buildings and opening of new schools," the Board approved a separate officer as secretary.¹⁶¹ Mr. J. B. Burfoot was elected for this position on the ninth ballot from a list of nineteen applicants. His salary was set at twelve hundred dollars per year, and he began immediately to carry out those duties described in Board Minutes as follows:

The secretary shall attend all meetings and keep a full and true record of the proceedings of the Board, and act as clerk of the Standing Committees, whose proceedings he shall keep in a well-bound book selected for the purpose. He shall give timely notice of all meetings of the Board and of Committees when requested so to do by the chairmen of the same. He shall keep in a neat and business-like manner the account books of the Board so as to show in detail at all times the receipts and disbursements, from what sources derived and on what account expended. He shall, at the end of each school month, under the direction of the superintendent, have prepared a pay roll of teachers in the City schools; and prepare for the signature of the Superintendent the checks to pay the same, which pay rolls, when properly receipted, he shall endorse and file for

¹⁶⁰"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 3.

¹⁶¹"Minutes," 1887-1898, op. cit., p. 93.

ready reference. He shall examine the monthly reports of the teachers of the country schools, see if they are properly certified, and if found correct, draw checks for the amounts due for the signature of the superintendent.¹⁶²

In addition, the secretary was obligated to keep a file of all official reports, petitions, appeals, teachers examination papers, and all other papers relating to the business of the Board. He was required to be acquainted with the operation of the schools to answer questions in the absence of the superintendent, and keep the office of the Board open daily, except Sunday, from nine A.M. to twelve P.M. and from one P.M. until four P.M.

Mr. Burfoot served until April 10, 1907, at which time he resigned, stating, "no Minutes have been read nor approved since June 14, 1905." Francis Peterson was elected to replace him, and in addition, a stenographer was hired at one dollar and twenty-five cents per meeting. Her report was not to replace the regular Minutes, but be a check against them, and be given out for publication.¹⁶³

In 1912, Mr. Peterson resigned to accept a vacancy on the Board caused by the resignation of Commissioner Richard Hines, who in turn, was elected as Board secretary. Mr. Hines subsequently served until his death in 1923,¹⁶⁴ being re-

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p. 105.

¹⁶⁴ "Minutes," 1922-1926, op. cit., p. 10.

elected in 1918¹⁶⁵ and 1922.¹⁶⁶ Mr. B. C. Rain, Mr. Hines' successor, was the last board secretary to serve during Murphy's administration.

Superintendent

By electing a superintendent in 1854, the Board of School Commissioners expressed their recognition of the need for a qualified person in whom could be entrusted the supervision of the schools. Nevertheless, the nine-member Board continued the long-standing practice of administering the business of the system through its several standing committees. In such a context a superintendent had little freedom to exercise forceful leadership; consequently his obligations seem to have been limited to such routine duties as classifying pupils, reporting on the progress of the instructional program and discipline, and making reports on the condition of the schools.¹⁶⁷

When Murphy relinquished his position as teaching-principal in 1900, he assumed responsibility not only for the general supervision of the schools of the City and County, but became the executive officer, business manager and treasurer of the Board. This assignment required that he receive

¹⁶⁵"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 257.

¹⁶⁶"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 378.

¹⁶⁷Organization of the Board, 1854, op. cit., p. 14.

and disburse all funds and serve as bookkeeper as well.¹⁶⁸

Murphy was required to supervise the "details of instruction, noting that teachers were fully employed, control the course of study, deal with pupil placement and discipline problems, inspect school premises and equipment, prepare all necessary blanks and forms, and make regular reports to the Board."¹⁶⁹

With the steady growth of the system, there apparently was a commensurate increase in the superintendent's duties for which he was solely responsible. The geographical area of the school district extended over territory approximately sixty miles long and twenty miles wide. Murphy's only means of transportation was by horse and buggy, and, because of the poor condition of roads in rural areas, he found it extremely difficult to meet the requirement that he visit all the schools.

Consequently, in 1903, he petitioned the Board for an assistant superintendent.¹⁷⁰ He stated that the system imposed on him a great amount of purely business matters, and made him the "business head" as well as the "educational head." He reported that the duties devolving upon him were numberless, and to perform them with even reasonable satisfaction had been a physical impossibility. He pointed out

¹⁶⁸"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 125.

¹⁶⁹Ibid.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 203.

the need to provide close supervision for inexperienced teachers who had no professional training, eloquently concluding his appeal as follows:

I feel confident that your wisdom in electing an assistant superintendent to supervise your country schools will be demonstrated, and can but result in better schools for both the country and city.

Relieved largely, as I will be of this feature of the work, I will be able to supervise more closely the City schools, and to observe their internal workings, and to report to you more accurately the ability of the teachers in your schools. I shall endeavor to keep in view only the best interest of your school system.¹⁷¹

An assistant superintendent was approved as Murphy requested, and, although he continued to visit rural schools when necessary, he gave close supervision only to the City schools for the remainder of his tenure.¹⁷²

Over the years, other central office personnel were added, such as a business assistant, instructional supervisors, office assistants [clerical], and a treasurer of the Board. Nevertheless, Murphy's working days were long. Due to his practice of conferring and planning with the assistant superintendent and supervisors, he seldom left his office before eight p.m.¹⁷³

¹⁷¹Ibid.

¹⁷²Pauline O'Rourke, personal interview, November 2, 1963.

¹⁷³Frank Grove, personal interview, August 21, 1965.

The Board secured legislation in 1923 to divest the Superintendent of his obligation as Treasurer, but with this exception, his major duties seem to have remained unchanged. However, as additional personnel were secured, the number and kind of tasks were described more specifically. To help visualize the increase in the breadth and scope of Murphy's overall responsibilities, his duties, along with those of the Treasurer of the Board, Assistant Superintendent, and Secretary of the Board are listed in Appendices H, I, J, and K, respectively.

Business Manager

The recommendation to create the position of Business Manager was proposed by Commissioner Tom Cochran on March 12, 1919. In making the recommendation he stated that his intent was to "separate, as far as practicable, the educational supervision and management of the schools from business management."¹⁷⁴

The following July, Edgar L. Cotting assumed this position and thus relieved Murphy of details of such tasks as "submitting feasible means of raising funds," issuing school warrants, supervision of buildings and lands, inspection and maintenance of buildings, selection of building sites, and co-ordinating the building program.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 320.

¹⁷⁵Ibid., et. passim.

School Trustees

From the time of the organization of the system, schools were established "in the country," in districts designated by the Board, with not more than one school in any one district.¹⁷⁶ In each district was a School Committee, or Trustees, consisting of three residents of the district who were elected annually by the people of the district. When such an election was not held, or if the names were not reported, a committee of Trustees was appointed by the Board.

School Committees, under the supervision of the Board, reported names of children between the ages of six and eighteen residing in their districts, selected school sites, arranged to secure or construct school buildings (according to Board plans), employed teachers, and enforced Board regulations.¹⁷⁷

Principals

Of the one hundred and one schools recorded as being in session in the 1900-1901 school year, seventy-one were one-teacher schools and the thirty remaining schools had from two to twelve teachers assigned. Teaching-principals were employed in all schools where there were assigned two or more teachers. Consequently, it might be assumed that there were

¹⁷⁶Organization of the Board, 1854, op. cit., p. 9.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., p. 10.

thirty such personnel. Monthly financial statements listed disbursements only for teachers, and the annual appointment list showed only a list of teachers. Where a teacher-principal was employed, his name was listed first followed by that of the assistant teacher, or teachers. In addition his position might be discerned by comparing his salary with that of assistant teachers.¹⁷⁸

Murphy believed that principals of the larger schools should be relieved of teaching duties and allowed to "do more supervision." During his first year as superintendent he stated:

I believe the time has come when the principals in our largest schools should be required to do less teaching and more supervision, and give more time and attention to the administrative work at the school. No man can do well all that is required of the principal. Principals are now expected to do the full work of a teacher and of an administrative officer besides.¹⁷⁹

By 1905, the principals of the Boys' High and Girls' High Schools were approved as supervising principals, but it was not until 1915, that the Board approved a system-wide policy bearing on supervising-principals. Beginning with the 1915-16 school term, principals of all schools of twelve rooms and above were made supervising principals, and "not required

¹⁷⁸"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., pp.96-98.

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p. 104.

to teach a grade."¹⁸⁰

Records which are available show that as early as 1854, there was designated in schools of two or more teachers a teaching-principal. Over the years, although many administrative responsibilities seem to have been delegated to the superintendent, the Executive Committee of the School Board played an active role in direct supervision of the schools. Consequently, administrative duties performed by teachers employed as teaching-principals were limited to such chores as keeping records of pupil attendance, residence of families, tardiness, pupil advancement, standing and conduct, receiving tuition, and preparation of reports to the Executive Committee.¹⁸¹

Minutes of the Board, circa, 1898, allude to the need to revise the school board handbook of rules and regulations, but there seems to be no evidence to show that such a publication was printed until 1912. By this time the system had grown to such a degree that more duties had been delegated, not only to the Superintendent and assistant superintendent, but to the teaching-principals as well. The range of and the degree to which "powers and duties" of principals had grown by 1912 are listed in Appendix G.

¹⁸⁰"Minutes," 1913-1916, op. cit., p. 183.

¹⁸¹Organization of the Board, 1854, op. cit., p. 16.

Although the number of supervising principals increased, as did the size of schools as a result of consolidation, the job description of principals changed little. In fact, the list of "powers and duties" of principals published three years prior to the end of Murphy's tenure was identical to the list printed in 1912.¹⁸²

School Improvement Association

At a meeting of the Alabama Federation of Women's Clerks in December, 1904, Mrs. Erwin Craighead introduced and secured the adoption of a motion which created the committee on School Improvement Associations.¹⁸³ This organization, which preceded parent-teacher organizations, was organized to unite the many socializing forces over the State in working for the improvement of school conditions. By 1907, there were a total of one-hundred and fifty-nine associations in various sections of the State.

Although the primary function of local school improvement associations was not money-raising, it was an important one, and the Board did not seem to be reluctant to call their attention to such needs as providing books for indigent

¹⁸² By-Laws and Regulations of the Board, 1923, op. cit., pp. 15-18.

¹⁸³ Department of Education of the State of Alabama, Annual Report for the Scholastic Year Ending September 30, 1916 (Montgomery: The Brown Printing Company, 1917), p. 77.

children¹⁸⁴ and tree planting.¹⁸⁵

Mrs. Erwin Craighead had been instrumental in establishing a kindergarten advisory group in 1901, and petitions to the Board from various associations to sponsor kindergartens "without cost to the Board," reflected their continuing interest in promoting pre-school education.¹⁸⁶ The attitude of the Board relative to the work of such groups might be reflected in the following committee report:

Your committee desires further to call to the attention of this Board the valuable services heretofore performed by the School Improvement Associations. We desire to commend that the Board recognize the semi-official relationship of this important auxiliary to school work, and furthermore select their assistance and same provided same be not in conflict with duly constituted school authorities.¹⁸⁷

The growth of the Parent-Teacher Association began to be reflected in Board Minutes in 1918, especially in the city limits of Mobile, but School Improvement Associations remained active throughout Murphy's tenure.

VI. FINANCES

From 1826, when the Board of School Commissioners was created, to 1854, when the State School System was organized,

¹⁸⁴"Minutes," 1904-1909, op. cit., p. 160.

¹⁸⁵"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 206.

¹⁸⁶Ibid., p. 188.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., p. 266.

the Mobile School System was maintained from such school taxes as fees on circuit and county court suits, actions, licenses on circuses, concerts and public exhibitions, rent on buildings and lands, donations, and tuition. During this period the Board had regularly disbursed funds to private and parochial schools, but in 1854 the Legislature passed an Act which condensed and collated the existing school laws in Mobile County and provided for increased revenues. A clause was inserted in the new Act which prohibited the Board from ever diverting any portion of the school fund to the maintenance or support of any schools that were under sectarian influence or control.¹⁸⁸

Between 1854 and 1856 the growth of the Mobile System became so rapid that the problem of financing the schools became acute. To seek relief, the Board petitioned the General Assembly in 1856 for legislation beneficial to the Mobile Public School System. The result was a special Act approved February 15, 1856, supplementary to the Act of January 16, 1854. It stated:

1. All monies collected for the state by the Judge of Probate for certain licenses to be appropriated to the school fund of Mobile County.
2. The Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County be authorized to levy an annual tax not exceeding one-twentieth of one per centum upon real and per-

¹⁸⁸ Willis G. Clark, Memorial Record of Alabama (Madison, Wisconsin: Brant and Fuller, 1893), Vol. I., p. 226.

sonal property of the county of Mobile for the benefit of the public schools of the county.¹⁸⁹

In 1866, because the Board was still plagued with financial problems, the General Assembly passed an Act for another one-half mill tax on property to support the Mobile Schools. Both the Acts of 1855 and 1866 were unique in the history of Alabama public schools, in that these were the only laws in the entire State which gave a board of education authority to levy a tax.¹⁹⁰

During the Reconstruction Period the Mobile schools were controlled by the State Board of Education, but the Constitution of 1875 again recognized the independence of the Mobile Public School System by allowing the local board to levy taxes and administer the schools with little State control. Section II of Act XIII of the Constitution of 1875 reads as follows:

The provisions of this article, and any of the general assembly, passed in pursuance thereof, to establish, organize, and maintain a system of public schools throughout the State shall apply to Mobile County only so far as to draw the portions of the funds to which said County will be entitled for school purposes, and to make reports to the superintendent of education, as may be prescribed

¹⁸⁹ Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Alabama at the Regular Session (Montgomery, Alabama: Bates and Lucas, State Printers, 1856), p. 148.

¹⁹⁰ Annie S. Owen, "The Financial Needs of the Mobile Public Schools and Potential Resources for School Support" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama, 1960), p. 14.

by law. And all special incomes and powers of taxation as now authorized by law for the benefit of public schools in said County shall remain undisturbed until otherwise provided by the general assembly; provided that separate schools for each race shall always be maintained by said authorities.¹⁹¹

In 1898, the State Legislature added an annual appropriation of \$100,000.00 to the public schools. It also provided a tax of one mill to be used solely for the maintenance of the public schools. The first allocation of \$17,413.92 from this tax to the Mobile Public Schools is reflected in the report of the finance committee in September, 1899.¹⁹²

The financial statement submitted to the Board at the time Murphy became superintendent shows a budget for the school session 1899-1900 of \$87,043.00. Sources of revenue for that year were as follows:

Balance on hand September 1, 1899	-	\$ 2,652.72
Cash from Judge of Probate	-	\$44,150.00
Cash from State Warrant	-	\$19,569.90
Cash from Special Taxes	-	\$17,413.92
Cash from Redemption	-	\$ 313.36
Cash from Polls	-	\$ 1,800.80
Cash from Sale of Down Timber	-	\$ 142.30
Cash Loan from Leinkauf	-	\$ 1,000.00
		<hr/>
Total		\$87,043.00 ¹⁹³

¹⁹¹Code of Alabama, 1876, Constitution of the State of Alabama, p. 147.

¹⁹²"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 36.

¹⁹³Ibid., p. 69.

Because of the rapidly expanding financial resources in the State of Alabama in 1900, the widespread discontent with the State's educational backwardness, the growth of pride and self-confidence among the people and the ever-increasing number of trained and intelligent workers in the field of education, there was great promise at this time for an educational renaissance.¹⁹⁴ Although the Mobile School System had been a model for public school education in Alabama in the nineteenth century, the strong features which marked the State school system during the first quarter of the nineteenth century were to greatly affect the Mobile System.¹⁹⁵

Prominent school men had for some years strongly advocated that the municipalities and school districts be given the power to levy special taxes for the public schools. This demand was one of the reasons for calling the Constitutional Convention of 1901.

Constitution of 1901

The Constitution of 1875 had entitled the Mobile Public Schools to its own system of taxation. Consequently, the school legislation enacted in 1901 may have had less significance for the Mobile System than for other systems operating in the State at that time.

¹⁹⁴ Moore, op. cit., p. 808.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

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¹⁹⁴ Moore, op. cit., p. 808.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

However, this Constitution was more "liberal toward education,"¹⁹⁶ gave special concessions to the Mobile System,¹⁹⁷ and it is necessary to point up those provisions which were to affect the Mobile School System during the tenure of Superintendent Murphy.

Section 256 authorized the Legislature to establish, organize, and maintain public schools for all children between the ages of seven and twenty-one years separately by race. The money from the Public School Fund was apportioned to each county according to the number of children of school age in the individual counties.¹⁹⁸

Section 258 provided that property left by people without wills or heirs would go to the public schools of the State. This revenue is known as income from escheat sources.¹⁹⁹

Section 259 provided that all poll taxes collected in a county shall be sent to the State and returned by the State to the county in which it was collected for the support of the public schools in that county.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁶ Annie S. Owen, op. cit., p. 16.

¹⁹⁷ J. R. Montgomery, "History of Support of Public Education in Mobile County with Special Reference to Finance" (unpublished Master's Thesis, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama, 1952), p. 43.

¹⁹⁸ Official Proceedings of the Constitutional Convention of the State of Alabama, Vol. IV, 1901, p. 504.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

Section 260¹ provided for the first State-wide levy of a property tax for all school systems in the State. This section reads as follows:

The income arising from the sixteenth section trust fund, the surplus revenue fund, until it is called for by the United States Government and the funds enumerated in Sections 257 and 258 of this constitution, together with a special annual tax of thirty cents on each one hundred dollars of taxable property in this state, which the legislature shall levy, shall be applied to the support and maintenance of the public schools and it shall be the duty of the legislature to increase the public school fund from time to time as the necessity therefor and the condition of the treasury and the resources of the State may justify: provided that nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to authorize the legislature to levy in any one year a greater rate of State taxation for all purposes including schools than sixty-five cents on each one hundred dollars' worth of taxable property; and provided further, that nothing herein contained shall prevent the legislature from first providing for the payment of the bonded indebtedness of the State and interest thereon out of all the revenue of the State.²⁰¹

Section 268 provided for the taking of a school census throughout the State every two years. It was permissive to take the census once every two years, but it was mandatory that a census be taken once every four years. Provision was also made for the punishment of persons making false enumerations.

Section 269 authorized the several counties in the State to collect a special tax not exceeding ten cents on each one hundred dollars of taxable property. The tax had

²⁰¹Ibid.

to be referred to and voted for by three-fifths of the people voting in order to be legal. The tax could not exceed \$1.25 on a hundred dollars of taxable property when included with the State and other taxes, excluding all special county taxes for public buildings, roads, bridges, and payment of debts existing at the ratification of the Constitution of 1875.²⁰²

The Period from 1900 to 1910

At the turn of the century, the City of Mobile emerged more prosperous "than she had ever been during her entire career." No effort had been spared in perfecting and developing a system of public schools.²⁰³ In a report to the state superintendent in 1904, covering the years 1903-04, 1904-05, Murphy stated that "the school system is in a healthy and growing condition."²⁰⁴ During this period receipts had fluctuated from such revenue sources as state warrants, the special school tax, redemptions, poll taxes, probate judge, and land leases. Moreover, these were sufficient to maintain the growing school system.

The panic of 1907-08 greatly affected the financial

²⁰²Ibid.

²⁰³News item in The Mobile Advertiser, March 4, 1900.

²⁰⁴Department of Education, Biennial Report, 1903-04, op. cit., p. 86.

status of the Mobile Public Schools.²⁰⁵ In his annual report, Murphy reflected "great embarrassment on account of lack of sufficient funds to properly maintain the school system."²⁰⁶ A tax on whiskey had been a primary source of revenue for the Mobile System, but with the passage of the Prohibition Laws in 1907, a loss of approximately eighty thousand dollars per year occurred.

The program of retrenchment which was carried on during the session 1908-1909, included a tuition fee of fifty cents, a twenty per cent reduction in salaries of teachers, and the abolishment of the position of assistant superintendent.²⁰⁷

This financial depression lasted only one school session, being relieved by an Act of the Legislature requiring the Revenue Board of Mobile County to levy an annual tax of two mills for school purposes.²⁰⁸ Mr. S. Palmer Gaillard, a member of the Board of School Commissioners at this time, was most active in securing the passage of this bill. Because of his efforts in behalf of this legislation, the bill

²⁰⁵ Annie S. Owen, op. cit., p. 19.

²⁰⁶ Department of Education of the State of Alabama, Biennial Report for the Scholastic Year Ending September 30, 1905 and 1906 (Montgomery: The Brown Printing Company, 1907) p. 71.

²⁰⁷ Department of Education, Annual Report, 1910, op. cit., p. 96.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 97.

became known as the Palmer Gaillard tax.

At the opening of schools in October, 1909, the salaries of teachers were restored, the incidental fees discontinued, and the position of assistant superintendent again established. Murphy stated that, "from this time to the present [1910], the schools have, in my opinion, shown advancement, both in numbers and in efficiency."²⁰⁹

The Period from 1910 to 1915

By 1910, the total amount of revenues available for the public schools of Mobile County had increased to \$201,768.64. Of this amount, \$111,176.25, or 55.1 per cent, came from County taxes.

In September, 1911, Murphy cautioned that the Board, in anticipation of a \$38,142.03 deficit, should make some provision for a more adequate revenue or else plan on radical retrenchment. Although revenues had increased each year, they were not adequate to provide for additional construction to house the growing pupil enrollment. The budget for the year 1910-11 included expenditures for six school buildings. Nevertheless, Murphy pointed out the pressing need for still more construction of modern buildings in rural communities.

The Board was greatly reluctant to "decrease the efficiency of the schools in the smallest degree," but to

²⁰⁹Ibid.

relieve the strained financial condition of the schools they did take such action to effect retrenchment which included discontinuing manual training and domestic science classes, reducing the salary of the secretary of the Board, reducing expenses and services of the medical inspector, and putting the schools on a basis of six months' free and two months' pay. The rate of pay was assessed at \$2.00 per month for high school classes and \$1.00 per month for grammar school classes.²¹⁰

Murphy had frequently advocated legislation which would enable the City of Mobile and the Board of Revenue Commissioners to appropriate to the School Board funds for school construction.²¹¹ As a result of bills prepared at the direction of the School Board in 1910, such legislation was approved in 1911 by the following Act:

The Act to Authorize City and County to Appropriate Funds for School Building, 1911

To authorize and empower the City of Mobile and County of Mobile to make appropriations from funds in their respective treasuries to be paid to the Mobile School Commissioners for erection and equipment of a public high school building and other public buildings in the City of Mobile.²¹²

In addition to the Act cited above, another local Act was approved which enabled the Mobile Board of School Com-

²¹⁰"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 123.

²¹¹Ibid., p. 124.

²¹²Acts of the Legislature of Alabama, Session of 1911, p. 223.

missioners to make short-term loans in order to meet current obligations before revenues for the current year were available. This Act reads as follows:

The Act to Authorize Short Term Loans, 1911

To authorize the board known as the Mobile School Commissioners to become indebted in anticipation of income for maintenance and operation of schools of Mobile County.²¹³

By this Act, the Board was allowed to become indebted in an amount not exceeding one-fourth of the annual income for any one year. Short-term loans had to be repaid within twelve months from the time of the loan.

The revenue from 1900 to 1915 had increased from \$201,768.64 per year to \$273,517.00 annually, an increase of \$71,748.36. Income from County and State ad valorem taxes accounted for most of the increase, which might reflect the great population growth of Mobile County during this period.²¹⁴

A statement of the Mobile County School Board's general condition, submitted at the end of the 1915-16 school session, showed a decrease in the floating debt of fifteen per cent, an eighteen per cent increase in income, twenty-one per cent increase in number of teachers employed, eighteen per cent increase in teachers' salaries, twenty-eight per cent increase in enrollment and a decrease in per pupil ex-

²¹³Ibid., p. 224.

²¹⁴J. R. Montgomery, op. cit., p. 57.

penditure from \$17.09 to \$16.72.²¹⁵ The report further stated that while reducing the debt a number of new schools had been placed in localities which had heretofore not enjoyed the advantages of schools. Also, equipment had been added and permanent improvements made to buildings at a cost of \$32,708.00.

The financial status of the System in 1915-16 may be observed in detail from Murphy's report to the State Superintendent, as follows:

Receipts

Balance from previous year	\$ 207.00
Public funds, poll tax, county tax, etc.	245,719.00
From sale of property	7,315.00
Fees	7,157.00
State and local for alterations of buildings	18,028.00
From other sources	2,091.00
	<hr/>
Total	\$273,517.00

Disbursements

Salary of superintendent	\$ 3,000.00
Salary of ass't. superintendent	2,100.00
Salary of principals (supervising)	7,846.00
Salaries of principals	38,304.00
Salaries of teachers	137,182.00
Other expenses of supervisors	4,458.00
Janitors and other employees	5,671.00
Fuel, water and lights	3,871.00
Repairs, replacements, etc.	6,585.00
New buildings and alterations	11,443.00
New equipment	3,858.00
Teachers' supplies	2,866.00

²¹⁵"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 83.

Other expenses	\$ 44,339.00
Balance on hand	1,994.00
	<hr/>
Total	\$273,517.00 ²¹⁶

Developments from 1916 to 1926

In the Spring of the 1916-17 school session, Murphy reported that "the financial condition for the coming term is still more discouraging." Since 1915, the income of the Board had been inadequate to meet the operating expenses of the schools and the deficit had been met by current loans. He further stated that the borrowing capacity had been reached and it would be impossible to borrow for the 1917-18 school year.²¹⁷ The Compulsory Attendance Law would become effective on October 1, 1917. Additional teachers, housing, janitors, fuel, teaching materials, and transportation would require an additional cost of \$21,250.00 to operate the schools. Sweeping reductions would have to be made or either "ask the public to provide more expenses." In order that "the schools be put on a financial footing," he proposed that there be an increase in County taxes. To implement his recommendation, the Board approved the necessary steps to hold a tax election for the increase of two mills for a period of

²¹⁶Department of Education of the State of Alabama, Annual Report for the Scholastic Year Ending September 30, 1916 (Montgomery: The Brown Printing Company, 1917), p. 144.

²¹⁷"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 110.

ten years, which was voted on, approved, and placed on the tax rolls on September 15, 1917.²¹⁸

One year later, the Board was able to reduce its current debt from \$62,045.00 to \$14,000.00, but expenditures continued to increase due to the growing enrollment and increased cost of operation. The 1918-19 school session began with an anticipated income of \$318,157.00, the amount of \$338,083.00 in expenditures, and an estimated deficit of \$19,926.00.²¹⁹ The following January, Murphy again called attention to "grades housed in rented rooms, temporary structures and basement rooms -- ill adapted to school room use on account of size, light, heat and ventilation," and recommended another increase in taxes or assessed valuation.²²⁰ On March 5, 1920, the Board considered a proposal to assess a one-mill County tax, and a three-mill tax on City property. Upon the advice of Palmer Pillans, attorney for the Board, the election for the one-mill tax was scheduled for May 11 to coincide with the "primary election" which was already set. This tax was approved by the voters and was placed on the tax rolls for seven years, to run concurrently with the two-mill tax passed in 1917.²²¹

²¹⁸Ibid., p. 148.

²¹⁹Ibid., p. 276.

²²⁰Ibid., p. 292.

²²¹"Minutes," 1919-1922, op. cit., p. 47.

Because laws governing the holding of elections, prohibited holding County elections simultaneously with district elections, the Board arranged for the three-mill district [city] election for September 24, 1920. This tax, for one mill, was also approved for a period of seven years, to be collected until 1927.²²²

When the State Examiner of Public Accounts audited the financial records at the end of the 1920-21 school session, he was able to report that "the financial affairs of the Board of School Commissioners is in the best condition which has ever prevailed -- no bills payable or unpaid obligations of the Board held by any of the banks, and with a surplus in sight at the end of this scholastic year of approximately \$8,000.00 to \$10,000.00."²²³

School enrollment continued to grow, however, and with it mounting expenditures for "new teachers, additional schools to be rented, new equipment, additional interest to be paid and additional insurance." Because the income at this time was not sufficient to provide for buildings and sites, the Board recommended that future building funds be secured from City and County bond issues which were already approved by law.²²⁴

²²²Ibid., p. 149.

²²³Ibid., p. 191.

²²⁴Ibid., p. 400.

The last budget proposed during Murphy's tenure, for the 1926-27 school session, showed anticipated receipts in the amount of \$766,300.00, expected disbursements of \$727,324.00, and an anticipated year-end balance of \$38,976.00.²²⁵

VII. INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION

Immediately with the establishment of the school system, the Board of School Commissioners felt that there should be a full time supervisor, not only of buildings and grounds and adherence to board policies, but of instruction as well. In January, 1854, Kiah B. Sewell, who was serving as the board secretary, was authorized to act as supervisor at a salary of \$1,200.00 per year. It was his duty to see that the regulations for the schools were carried out and rigidly adhered to by teachers, to see that schools were properly dismissed, and to report the neglect and inefficiency of teachers, the lack of pupil progress, and to make suggestions and recommendations conducive to the interest of the schools.²²⁶

When the position of superintendent was created on October 11, 1854, Mr. Sewell was appointed to fill this post. The first organization handbook, printed by the Board in

²²⁵"Minutes," 1922-1926, op. cit., p. 451.

²²⁶"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1852-1857, p. 51.

1854, includes the following supervisory obligations:

1. He shall devote himself to the study of the school system, the condition of the schools, the methods of instruction, the classification of the pupils, and in order to better suggest appropriate means for the improvement of Mobile, shall study the habits and wants of our people, and keep himself acquainted with the school system, and the progress of instruction and discipline in other places.
2. He shall exercise a personal supervision over all the schools and departments, and visit and examine each of them as often as once in each term, and as much oftener as his other duties will permit. He shall pay special attention to the order and discipline of the schools, and the manners and habits of the pupils, and the modes of instruction. He shall have frequent interviews with the teachers, and suggest to them, on suitable occasions, whatever he may think necessary to promote the efficiency and advancement of the schools; and he will see that the regulations established by the Board are observed and complied with by pupils and teachers.²²⁷

Special Supervisors

The first supervisory position approved during Murphy's tenure was that of a music supervisor. In 1901, he called the "Board's attention to the fact that music was not properly taught" and recommended that Mrs. Maud Truwitt be elected for this post at a salary of \$65.00 per month. In his annual report two months later, he stated that "for the first time the schools' music will be entrusted to the management of a skilled supervisor." He further stated:

²²⁷Organization of the Board, 1854, op. cit., p. 14.

This supervisor will visit the different rooms as often as possible, and meet the teachers for the purpose of instructing them at stated times.²²⁸

The first general education supervisor was hired eight years later when Mrs. Maud Kimball was assigned to supervise the primary grades, and her assignment, as was Mrs. Truwitt's, was restricted to city schools.

Kindergarten classes which were begun in 1901 proved to be popular, and, due to their growth, the position of supervisor of kindergartens was approved and was filled by Miss Elizabeth Johnston in 1912.²²⁹

Other supervisors, classified as Special Supervisors, were added, and by 1910, the list included one each for the areas of music, primary work, manual arts, domestic science, and drawing. Their duties included:

Section 1. Special supervisors shall be subject to the direction and supervision of the Superintendent.

Section 2. They shall visit regularly and impartially the several departments in which they are employed to teach; prepare programme of visits; designate the hour and the day for such visits to each school, and the said programme of visits shall not be set aside or varied except for good and sufficient reasons, and the Superintendent shall be promptly notified of such change. A schedule of visits shall be furnished the Superintendent one week after the opening of the school term.

²²⁸"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 125.

²²⁹"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 87.

Section 3. In order that no time may be lost from regular school work, Special Supervisors must notify promptly the principal of any school when it is found impossible to be present at the designated hour, or when they find they cannot reach the school on schedule time.

Section 4. Each Supervisor must give regular, systematic instruction in the work of his department and must select such hours and places for meetings as will be most convenient to a majority of the teachers.

Section 5. No Special Supervisor shall accept compensation for any instruction given teachers when such instruction is in line with his regular duties.

Section 6. Special Supervisors are not expected to report on the qualifications of teachers except so far as relates to the special work over which they have supervision.

Section 7. At the close of the school term each Special Supervisor shall submit a written report to the Superintendent, setting forth the character, progress and needs of the work supervised, and this report shall become a part of the Superintendent's annual report to the Board.

Section 8. Special Supervisors must confer from time to time with the principals whose schools they visit, in order that there may be thorough co-operation between principals and Supervisors, and they shall notify the principal of their arrival and departure.²³⁰

The recommendation which Murphy made to the Board on July 11, 1913, probably had the most significant effect on the development of supervision in the system when he stated:

I am of the opinion that a competent supervisor of your grammar grades will greatly increase the efficiency of your schools and bring this department

²³⁰By-Laws and Rules and Regulations, 1912, op. cit.,
pp. 26-27.

up to the high standard which, in my opinion, exists in your primary department.²³¹

The following month Miss Olive Dodge was appointed to fill this newly approved position in which she served until 1944. Although she became principal of Barton Academy in 1933, she continued to carry on the duties of an instructional supervisor until her retirement. The controversial, yet colorful tenure Miss Dodge served is referred to even today, [1966] with both esteem and disdain as the "Olive Dodge era."²³²

In keeping with the pattern that earlier supervisors followed, Miss Dodge was assigned to supervise only schools in the City. Over the years that followed, the contribution that supervisors made in supervision as well as teacher-training was reflected in a high degree of teacher effectiveness. This is attested to by the fact that students were required to achieve at the eighth-grade level, as measured by standardized tests, in order to be promoted from the seventh grade.²³³

Concern due to the lack of supervisory service to the country schools was frequently expressed by patrons in rural

²³¹"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 404.

²³²Eloise Rolls, personal interview, December 16, 1964.

²³³Ibid.

areas, but, due to the exigencies of World War I, the shortage of teachers, textbooks, and other instructional supplies, the supervisory staff was reduced rather than expanded. With the ending of the war, however, the Board did approve an additional supervisor, and Miss Pauline O'Rourke, a fourth grade teacher in the Woodcock School, was appointed to serve in the rural elementary schools. In approving her appointment, the Board stipulated that "the person shall do summer work to prepare herself for the position." Miss O'Rourke attended Peabody Institute during the summer of 1918 and assumed her duties in September at a salary of \$1,200.00 per year.²³⁴

By the end of Mr. Murphy's tenure, two additional supervisors had been approved. Miss Natalie Simison served as assistant to Miss O'Rourke from 1923, and Mr. J. R. Sherman worked as Physical Director from 1922.²³⁵

Supervisory Services to Negro Teachers

The Board of School Commissioners had taken steps as early as 1867 to provide education for Negro children, and by 1888 there were thirty-one schools employing fifty-one teachers, nearly all Negro, with an average enrollment of forty pupils to a teacher.²³⁶

²³⁴Pauline O'Rourke, personal interview, November 2, 1963.

²³⁵Directories, Sessions 1922-1923 to 1925-1926.

²³⁶Clark, History of Education, op. cit., p. 272.

Graduates of the Barton Academy taught in the Negro schools when they first opened, but were replaced as Negro teachers became sufficiently well trained to occupy the positions. By 1888, however, nearly all teachers in Negro schools were Negro. Great care was taken to select good teachers and in order to better prepare them weekly classes were held for Negro teachers by the Superintendent.²³⁷

Although no reference prior to 1925 is made to supervision of Negro teachers, the Directories of the Mobile Public Schools for 1923-24 and 1925-26 indicate that Bessie C. Fonvielle was assigned as a Jeannes Fund supervisor.

It apparently had not been the policy of the Board to allow white supervisors to service Negro schools, and instructional supervision, as well as administrative supervision of Negro schools, was the obligation of the Superintendent and his assistant.

In August, 1924, the Board received a communication from Negro teachers assigned to "country schools" asking for two [Negro] supervisors, one for the City and one for the country. In his report to the Board in September, the Superintendent reported adversely to the petition but his reason was not recorded.²³⁸ When the question was raised again in

²³⁷Ibid.

²³⁸"Minutes," 1922-1926, op. cit., p. 266.

the November 12th meeting, the Superintendent reported that a Negro supervisor would not be needed for administrative duties but should be "competent in techniques of classroom teaching."²³⁹

Although an additional Negro supervisory position was approved, Mr. Murphy was unable to locate a qualified person until a year later when Miss Cora Howard was hired at a salary of \$1,400.00. There is no record that Miss Howard actually served as a supervisor. No mention is made of her in Board Minutes, and the Mobile Public School Directory for 1926-27 lists, along with the name of Bessie C. Fonvielle, only the name of Mary W. Weeks as the supervisor of City schools.

Miss Weeks served in this capacity until 1932, at which time, due to the depression, she was transferred to the position of attendance supervisor.

The appointment of Mary W. Weeks in 1923 marks the first attempt to provide general instructional supervision for Negro schools.²⁴⁰

Function of Instructional Supervisors

Although the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile

²³⁹Ibid., p. 287.

²⁴⁰Mrs. Rosetta H. Duncan, personal interview, May 1, 1964.

County had listed specific obligations for "Special Supervisors" in 1912, there seems to be no written record of a job description for general instructional supervisors from 1913, when Miss Dodge was appointed, until 1926.

In a review of her assignment as the first rural supervisor in Mobile County, and in the State of Alabama, as well, Miss Pauline O'Rourke recalls that the superintendent's only directive was to "go out and help the teachers."²⁴¹ An insight into practices which supervisors followed is given in the following Board directive to the music supervisor at the time of her appointment:

To the supervisor shall be given the power to call meetings of teachers for instruction in methods or subject matter as he or she may deem necessary, subject to the approval of the Superintendent. The attendance of teachers at all such meetings shall be regular and punctual, and for willful neglect or refusal to attend such meetings the teacher at fault shall be reported to the Superintendent. All notices of meetings shall be sent to the principals of the different schools, who shall notify the teachers in his or her department.²⁴²

Instructional supervisors were responsible for a wide range of administrative duties, a practice followed not only in Mobile County, but in all Alabama counties where supervisors were assigned. A study of problems of supervisors in

²⁴¹Pauline O'Rourke, personal interview, November 2, 1963.

²⁴²"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 121.

Alabama, which included Mobile County, completed in 1925 lists some such duties:

When the supervisor visits the school, she notes carefully the condition of the building and outhouses and examines the source of the water supply. She gives the school a rating on these items.²⁴³

Other items which were reported on, as shown in this study, were conditions of lighting, heat, ventilation, number and condition of desks, blackboard space, number of textbooks, and amount of instructional supplies. Because there were no janitors, housekeeping was done by pupils and teacher. Consequently, reports were kept on housekeeping and health conditions. Practices followed by supervisors in Mobile County were not dissimilar to those carried on in other Alabama school systems. They were allowed to make a wide range of both administrative and supervisory decisions as they worked "to help the superintendent all they could."²⁴⁴

Supervisors' In-Service Meetings

Colston Hall, in the Barton building, was the center for monthly meetings of both City and County teachers. Type-written lesson plans for the ensuing months were distributed, as well as an outline to show what and how much material was

²⁴³Maline Burns, "The Problems of Supervision of County Schools in Alabama" (unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, 1925), p. 20.

²⁴⁴Pauline O'Rourke, personal interview, November 2, 1963.

to be covered. Subject matter taken up in such meetings were reading, geography, health, English, and history. Miss Olive Dodge frequently supplemented the written and oral directions with demonstration teaching with pupils who had been brought in for that purpose. A typical unit of work in history for the month of February would include a study of Robert E. Lee, Andrew Jackson, or Abraham Lincoln, and teachers were allowed to choose one to teach the following month. Although detailed lesson plans were provided, teachers were encouraged to use a variety of materials that they themselves might select.²⁴⁵

Teachers were required to submit, at the following meeting, the three best papers in each subject area that pupils had written during the month. Papers submitted were evaluated by supervisors and used in connection with teacher-supervisor conferences at the first opportunity. Because such reports were done by pupils on papers size 8 1/2 x 11 inches, they were commonly referred to as "long papers."

Supervisors Testing Program

Although classroom teachers culminated units of instruction with written tests which they had constructed, tests prepared by supervisors were given each month in all subject areas throughout the County. Such tests were corrected and scored by supervisors. On the basis of such

²⁴⁵Eloise Rolls, personal interview, December 16, 1963.

tests, teachers, their classes, and schools were ranked on the basis of "averages" made by pupils. In addition, closely guarded achievement tests, such as the Metropolitan and Stanford, were administered in October and May by clerks from the supervisors' office. Teachers were allowed to assist in the administration, but were not permitted to examine the test booklets. Tests results, however, which showed each child's name, test score, and class median, were returned to teachers to apprise them of their pupils' achievement as compared with other classes in the school and school system.²⁴⁶

Pupils were promoted on the basis of standardized tests in the upper elementary grades. In each case, they were required to demonstrate achievement above the grade level to which they were to be promoted. Test scores which pupils were required to make in order to be promoted were as follows:

Grade Level (Year)	Promotion and Score (Year and Month)
4	4.3
5	5.9
6	6.7
7	8.0 ²⁴⁷

In order to be promoted to the eighth grade, a seventh grade pupil must have scored at the eighth year during the

²⁴⁶Bernice Williamson, personal interview, December 16, 1963.

²⁴⁷Ibid.

month of May of his seventh year. Seventh grade teachers, in preparing their annual promotion lists, indicated a "black C" for the gain of one year. Pupils who scored below the seventh year had their grades reported in red, and pupils scoring above the seventh year had their grades recorded in green.

Teachers also were retained and replaced at the end of the scholastic year on the basis of pupils' test scores, and salary increments were awarded to teachers on the basis of their effectiveness as measured by test scores.²⁴⁸

Classroom Visitation

Although supervisors were responsible for a variety of tasks, classroom visitation comprised their major activity and the one which they most enjoyed. Although their contacts with teachers were not as frequent as they desired, they visited as often as possible. They worked "as individuals" setting plans and arranging their schedules as they "saw fit," so long as they filed a copy with the Superintendent.²⁴⁹

Mrs. Bernice Williamson recalls the occasion when Miss Dodge walked into her room, sat in the rear of the class, and opened up her "little black book." The usual procedure was to follow-up the observation with a conference in the principal's office. Miss Dodge would always open such a conference

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ Pauline O'Rourke, personal interview, November 2, 1963.

with a complimentary remark, but would proceed to make suggestions for improving the lesson, such as "You said 'all right' forty-two times," or "You did all the talking. When do the children get to talk?"²⁵⁰

²⁵⁰Bernice Williamson, personal interview, December 16, 1963.

CHAPTER III

SAMUEL S. MURPHY, THE EDUCATOR

I. PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

If his Board had not understood Murphy's conception of the function of the school when they elected him as their instructional leader, they may have caught a glimpse of his vision from his first annual report to the Board. It was then that he stated his belief that the school was entrusted with the "whole child," and it must pay equal attention to his physical, his mental, and his moral nature.¹

He felt keenly that the schools belonged to the people² and people were interested in their schools.³ The degree of progressivism which marked his leadership might be described as moderate, when interpreted from his statement that, "it is my desire to be alert, and vigilant, to be progressive without being radical, that what has been gained may not be lost, that if any mistake is made through inadvertence [sic] of error of judgment it may be corrected as

¹"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1898-1904, p. 104.

²Mrs. S. S. Murphy, personal interview, April 17, 1965.

³"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 4.

soon as possible, and that each succeeding year may witness some improvement in the public schools of Mobile County.⁴

Curriculum

Murphy believed that the instructional program should be adapted to the children, and when new books were adopted, they should be adapted to the course of study.⁵ He felt that there was a natural age for the presentation of each subject, and forcing work upon pupils whose minds were not mature enough to grasp it is extremely harmful and tends to retard their mental development.⁶

Balance in the course of study. He stated that the "tremendous elimination of pupils which took place in grades one to eight," was a reflection on the course of study, and recommended "full co-operation with the state authorities to evolve a course of study that will not only interest, and hold in school our boys and girls, but that will develop the highest type of citizenship, and give to each child the opportunity to become mentally alert, physically fit, morally strong and vocationally efficient."⁷ Further, he said he believed the program of studies should be adjusted so that

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., p. 2.

⁶ "Minutes," 1852-1857, op. cit., p. 3.

⁷ S. S. Murphy, "Address of the President of the Association," Alabama Educator's Association Bulletin, 39: 31, April, 1921.

it can be "easily coupled up with living conditions in the community in which it is to be used."⁸

Aesthetic development. Because he appreciated the "educative and refining influence arising from the study and observation of good pictures," Murphy advocated ornamenting the walls of school buildings with works of real artistic value.⁹ He stated that "art is an expression of the beautiful and true, and arouses in the child a love and respect for nature."¹⁰ He regarded music as the universal language of love, joy, sorrow, and patriotism. He believed that it stimulated the imagination, inspired the highest emotions, secured concentration, and developed natural and community spirit. Nevertheless, he felt that such aesthetic offerings were neglected in the curriculum, and quoted the poet who wrote, "music washes from the soul the dust of everyday life, and art is the child's rainbow of promise."¹¹

Evaluation. "If we are to know the value of the course of study," Murphy said, "we must have some standards for our school work."¹² He believed that proper evaluation by scientific standards was the most rational and most needed

⁸Ibid.

⁹"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 104.

¹⁰S. S. Murphy, "Address," op. cit., p. 32.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

type of supervision in the American school.¹³

Teaching Methods

The position which Murphy took on matters relating to adequate educational opportunities for children, seemed to reflect great rigidity. His uncompromising stand on such issues involving finances, housing, and teacher competence have been pointed out.

Conversely, he seemed to be equally uncompromising that teachers be allowed great freedom in methods of instruction.¹⁴ He felt that no course of study, "however perfect, will work of itself." He believed that if it is to be of any value, it must be developed in the hands of a skillful teacher. He stated that, "the days of assigning lessons from the pages of the text are past, and such a practice has no place in the modern school."¹⁵

He expressed strong belief in motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, and that practically all subject matter needs to be motivated. "Too long," he said, "has the average child had but one motive - to stand well in his class, and receive the approval of those in authority." He felt that "we must realize that the mere memorizing of facts does not

¹³Mildred Smith, personal interview, September 24, 1965.

¹⁴S. S. Murphy, "Address," op. cit., p. 32.

¹⁵Ibid.

constitute education in its true sense."¹⁶

Teachers were required to attend monthly meetings to receive mimeographed lesson plans which they would use during the ensuing month. Units of work in all subject areas were distributed, and "the teachers followed along as the supervisor read them aloud."¹⁷ It may be well to point up, however, that during the period of Murphy's tenure, the majority of teachers had only high school diplomas, and they needed more direction and closer supervision.¹⁸

Despite the "screw-down" desks, and county-wide lesson plans, teachers were encouraged to be as creative as they could, and were allowed to depart from the lesson plans "so long as the children got the information and the understandings."¹⁹

Discipline

Limited reference to disciplinary matters during Murphy's tenure seem to be available; nevertheless, it may be sufficient to discern his attitude toward discipline as it relates to child growth and development. Rules and regu-

¹⁶ Mildred Smith, personal interview, September 24, 1965.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County, 1912 (Mobile: Mobile Book Binding Company, 1912), p. 20.

lations which were developed during the first decade of Murphy's administration charged teachers with careful and constant attention to the discipline and instruction of pupils, giving special attention to the habits, manners, and morals of their pupils. Not only were they challenged by precept to inculcate the virtues of truthfulness, temperance, punctuality, neatness and orderly deportment, but by example as well.²⁰

Corporal punishment was allowed to be administered by the principal only, rather than teachers, and never in the presence of other pupils. Corporal punishment was not to be used if milder measures could be employed, but, when used, it was not to be cruel or excessive.²¹

During the years that Murphy served as a classroom teacher, he gained the reputation as a "friendly, gentle man," but because he was "firm and businesslike, he never had to paddle anybody."²²

Murphy was described as a genial and friendly person, but "beneath his kindly personality was more steel than one might suspect."²³ One could see his influence as a kind man

²⁰Ibid., p. 17.

²¹By-Laws and Regulations of the Board, 1923, p. 17.

²²Robert Peterson, personal interview, December 13, 1965.

²³Frank Grove, personal interview, August 21, 1965.

from his family life, yet he was a father who demanded respect and obedience from his children.²⁴

His attitude relative to discipline was reflected in the school board regulation which obligated teachers to practice such discipline in their respective schools as would be exercised by a kind and judicious parent in the government of his family.²⁵

"Murphy was kind, but underneath it all was a firmness which manifested itself where and when it became necessary, and this characterized his administration of the schools."²⁶

Commitment to Public Education

With the statement, "I prefer to cast my lot with the public schools," Murphy sounded the key note of his life's theme, for his only employment was in the public schools of Mobile County, his entire tenure having been served within one square block.²⁷

It was said that he was one of the truly great educational statesmen in Alabama, having quietly and modestly built one of the best public school systems in the South.²⁸

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵By-Laws and Regulations of the Board, op. cit., p. 20.

²⁶Frank Grove, personal interview, August 21, 1965.

²⁷Mrs. S. S. Murphy, personal interview, May 14, 1965.

²⁸Letter to Olive Dodge from Spright Dowell, November 12, 1926.

Yet, one may better perceive the depth of his commitment to public education from a very personal anecdote related by Murphy's wife, Edith Marechal Murphy. When she and Murphy decided to marry in the spring of 1909, Mrs. Murphy was employed as a teacher. Because of the Board policy which prohibited the employment of married women teachers, "the marriage date was put off until school was out." Murphy stated that he simply would not marry a teacher who would quit her job to get married.²⁹

Teacher selection. Murphy felt that the most important and the most difficult duty he had was the recommending of suitable teachers, because it was the "direct and most abiding influence which he exerted upon the work and character of the schools."³⁰

"Good schools," he said, "will exist where the selection of teachers are appointed or retained." He seemed to be aware of the ever-present temptation to give way to pressure, but felt that, because those appointed will continue to render good or poor service for years to come, the duty of recommending and electing the most capable is imperative. His commitment to resist such pressures is seen in his following statement:

²⁹Mrs. S. S. Murphy, personal interview, April 17, 1965.

³⁰"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 203.

Those who have training and skill in teaching should be elected no matter how persistently those who lack these qualifications are urged for important position. Children have only a limited period of their lives to devote to education, and they deserve the best teachers we can give them. Money paid annually to poor teachers in this county amounts to nothing less than a misappropriation of school funds.³¹

Adequate finances. Although Murphy is characterized as having been a quiet man, kindly, with no enmity in his make-up,³² the steel in his backbone³³ may have been revealed in numerous challenges to his Board and community for adequate financial support for education. Nor was his concern limited to the bounds of Mobile County; rather, he felt that the needs of public education, and in the State and Nation, were a public problem.³⁴ In pointing to the "humiliating position which Alabama occupied in comparison with her sister states," he stated that the fundamental problem was one of adequate revenue for the schools, and that if the standards of public education were improved in the State, it would be done as a result of larger financial support.³⁵

He advocated waiting with patience for an economic revival, but while waiting, he said, "propaganda should be

³¹ Ibid.

³² Editorial in the Mobile News-Item, November 5, 1926.

³³ Frank Grove, personal interview, August 21, 1965.

³⁴ Alabama Educators' Association Bulletin, op. cit., p. 27.

³⁵ Ibid.

spread for an adequate revenue for public education, including the common schools, the normal schools, and the institutions of higher learning."³⁶

Murphy believed that people must be brought to a realization that good schools cost money, but "poor ones are dear at any price."³⁷

II. RELATIONSHIPS

Murphy was described as being the epitome of the "hail-fellow-well-met" person. He loved everybody.³⁸ Although he was respected for his professional ability, he was, in turn, loved by everyone for his charming personality which made him the friend, trusted associate, and advisor of the thousands who had come into the wide circle of his acquaintance.³⁹

Relationships with Pupils

Mae Eanes stated that "the inspiration for his personality," was his love for children.⁴⁰ Mrs. Charles B.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Alabama Educators' Association Bulletin, op. cit., p. 27.

³⁸Mrs. S. S. Murphy, personal interview, May 14, 1965.

³⁹Letter to Olive Dodge from R. E. Tidwell, November, 1926.

⁴⁰News item in The Public School Courier [Mobile], November 17, 1926.

Vaughn felt that he was the best friend that the children of Mobile ever had. His love for them made him labor and sacrifice himself in their behalf, and his life's aim was to secure for them the best it was in his power to obtain, sparing himself not at all.⁴¹ His love for children was reported to be "remarkable," and children repaid him with rare devotion.⁴² A typical scene was one in which he tightly held a child in his arms while another tugged at his knee.⁴³

Nor were the older children strangers to this man. Their superintendent was no remote personage, but an intimate friend whose visits and greetings were eagerly sought. His office was never closed to any child. He was never too busy to give ear to their request or to listen to their woes. Many a wayward boy found his counsel loving as well as wise, and went forth determined to make a man of himself.⁴⁴

Bernice Williamson told of an incident which might serve to illustrate Murphy's attitude toward children. A fun-loving boy who seemed to be incorrigible was suspended by the principal. He went to Mr. Murphy to be reinstated. After talking over the problem with the youngster, he not only reinstated him, but gave him carfare to get back to

⁴¹Statement by Mrs. Charles B. Vaughn in The Public School Courier [Mobile], November 17, 1926.

⁴²Editorial in The Public School Courier, op. cit.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

school. She stated that, "such acts made him beloved by almost every boy in Mobile, both good and bad."⁴⁵

In a eulogy to Murphy, at the time of his death, the Reverend John W. Phillips stated that:

...Murphy combined modesty with success, which is the splendor of accomplishment; his forcefulness and kindness was [sic] the distinguishing mark of his great soul; because he loved and was loved, he won life's greatest achievement.

Because Murphy possessed these qualities to an unusual degree, he stood high among the educational leaders of the land, and was crowned with the laurel of a child's heart when he was called...

the Dear friend of the children.⁴⁶

Relationships with Teachers

Murphy knew about every teacher in the school system.⁴⁷ As the system grew, and central office personnel were added, his school visits were restricted to the City schools; yet, he seemed to stay apprised of teachers' activities through reports from the assistant superintendent and county supervisors.⁴⁸ An excerpt from the following letter from a school librarian illustrates his interest:

⁴⁵Bernice Williamson, personal interview, December 16, 1963.

⁴⁶Letter to Olive Dodge from the Reverend John W. Phillips, November 8, 1926.

⁴⁷Lenore Jones, retired principal, personal interview, February 25, 1965.

⁴⁸Ibid.

Thank you for the pamphlet which you sent me yesterday. There is much of this applicable to "day school" libraries. The article is most interesting and helpful.

I certainly appreciate your taking time from your very busy day to send this to me. I wish every teacher in the country might have the same kind of thoughtful superintendent and friend.⁴⁹

Although teachers did not seem to regard Murphy as a forceful person, they seemed to be unanimous in their regard for him as courteous, thoughtful, pleasant, and sensitive...a "southern gentleman type."⁵⁰ They apparently enjoyed his visits to their classrooms because of his "cheery disposition."⁵¹ They felt that he was interested in them, not as teachers only, but in their families and home life.⁵²

Their regard for him may be seen in the statement by Dr. K. J. Clark, Murphy's successor:

He was not well, I am sure. When I first met him, and after I came to live in Mobile, I saw him only a few times before he was confined to his bed. I was therefore never able really to know Mr. Murphy, but feel as if I only made his acquaintance. Very vivid, however, are my impressions of him. One could not meet him without feeling the spirit of the man, his genuine interest both in his work and the people with whom he came in contact.

⁴⁹ Letter to Murphy from M. Elizabeth Moffat, June 12, 1924.

⁵⁰ Mildred Smith, personal interview, September 24, 1965.

⁵¹ Statement by Mrs. Lena Matzenger in The Public School Courier [Mobile], November 17, 1926.

⁵² Ibid.

Most impressive of his fine qualities are revealed by the devotion to him of the teachers who have labored with him many years. Those who knew him best, and who labored with him longest, loved him best.⁵³

Relationships with Patrons

His outstanding characteristic was his kindliness. He had a way of making one feel at ease and would listen to a problem any time, night or day.⁵⁴ Because he was genial and approachable, he was popular, not only in educational circles, but in civic life as well.⁵⁵

In addition to recognizing his friendliness and genuine concern for others, patrons seemed also to see an image of a competent educational leader, as attested to in the following statements:

The genuineness of Samuel S. Murphy's character is shown in his willingness to let results show for his labors, and by his dislike of all boasting or self-advertising. He was capable and diligent, and sought sincerely the advancement of education, striving to bring the public schools of Mobile up to the highest standard and succeeding in great measure in his effort.⁵⁶

...an unusual example of a man devoted sincerely, undividedly and capable, to his task. Public instruction was to him a life-work in the truest sense,

⁵³The Public School Courier, op. cit.

⁵⁴Frank Grove, personal interview, August 21, 1965.

⁵⁵Editorial in the Mobile News-Item, November 5, 1926.

⁵⁶Letter to Mrs. S. S. Murphy, from Erwin Craighead, November 8, 1926.

for it was not only his lifelong field, but was likewise the field that evoked his spontaneous enthusiasm.⁵⁷

Relationships with Members of the Board

"Dr. Murphy had one of the longest periods of service as teacher and superintendent under one Board of Education of any person among educational workers in Alabama."⁵⁸ He was not spectacular in his methods, never "played to the galleries," but because of the magnetism of a strong personality, he always attained most commendable results.⁵⁹ Although Murphy was vociferous in pointing out needs of the system to the Board, he seemed never to try to influence their decisions. Rather, he believed that the schools belonged to the people, that board members represented the people, and that he was the servant of the Board.⁶⁰ This attitude may be reflected in his manner of making reports to the Board, as: "Should your high school corps of teachers remain the same,"⁶¹ and, "I am gratified to say that the work done in the schools, under your direction and control, has been performed in a faithful and successful man-

⁵⁷Statement by Warren H. Roberts in The Public School Courier [Mobile], November 17, 1926.

⁵⁸R. E. Tidwell, op. cit.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Mrs. S. S. Murphy, personal interview, May 14, 1965.

⁶¹"Minutes," 1916-1919, op. cit., p. 343.

ner."⁶²

Although his official relations with board members were professional and proper, his personal relations with them were as "cordial as they could be."⁶³

The confidence which the Board placed in Murphy may be seen in a statement by a member of the Board in 1912, at which time Murphy was elected to a new four-year term. After his acceptance speech, in which he assured the Board of his willingness to devote himself to the welfare of the schools, Commissioner McGowin made the following statement:

When I first came on the Board I felt that there was a lack of enthusiasm; there was not sufficient rallying to the support of the superintendent. I felt that it was my duty to locate the cause of this lack of enthusiasm and talked with several members of the Board.

From what I could gather, I believe it was due to the fact that you were not allowed a free hand in your administration of school affairs. As far as I am personally concerned, I wish to assure you that the Board would back you up in any proposition you wish to carry through, and you would be given a free hand in any move that looked reasonable.

The Board has confidence in your ability, and will support you in any way it can.⁶⁴

Following his term as president of the Board of School Commissioners, John T. Cochran expressed his appreciation to

⁶²"Minutes," 1898-1904, op. cit., p. 104.

⁶³Palmer Pillans, personal interview, May 8, 1965.

⁶⁴"Minutes," 1909-1913, op. cit., p. 295.

Murphy, not only for the personal courtesies shown during his tenure, but for the efficient service he [Murphy] gave to the system.⁶⁵ He further stated that he had never been associated with a public official who worked any harder than Murphy, or who was as devoted and loyal in the interest of Mobile County children. He concluded by saying that he had always been able to get from him details and intelligently prepared data to help in voting on important matters, and in carrying on the duties as president of the Board.⁶⁶

Statements which further underscore the esteem in which Murphy was held by his Board included:

...as a member of the school board - the first time, for several years, and for the past two years, I had every opportunity to know Mr. Murphy. I had implicit confidence in everything he should say to me and I had great respect for his judgment.⁶⁷

...I wish more could have been said in the report we adopted at our meeting about the ones, particularly yourself, [Murphy] who did the real work that constituted the excellent showing made by the schools.⁶⁸

I look back for thirty years and recall as a boy his kindness and consideration for his pupils, when at the time a teacher, and as the years went on it was my privilege to be associated with him as one of the Board of School Commissioners, and in private life. I can sincerely say that I think his heart

⁶⁵Letter to Murphy from John T. Cochran, November 20, 1919.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Letter to Olive Dodge from John T. Cochran, November, 1926.

⁶⁸Letter to Murphy from R. Percy Roach, November 18, 1918.

contained no malice towards any human being, but on the other hand, he had always the kindest things to say of others.⁶⁹

In summing up Murphy's achievements during his administration, and to account for his long tenure, Palmer Pillans, school board attorney, stated:

"Hell, he was just a good man."⁷⁰

III. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Promotion of Professionalism Among Teachers

It was stated that exemptions to the State school laws relative to requirements for the education and certification of teachers may have been a retarding force on the Mobile School System.⁷¹ Although the Board of School Commissioners advocated the hiring of high school graduates as teachers, and giving preference to graduates of the local system, Murphy seemed to crusade for the upgrading of teachers through extensive in-service programs⁷² and the promotion of teaching as a profession. He felt that low salaries were not the only cause for the shortage of teachers.

⁶⁹Letter to Olive Dodge from R. A. Christian, November 12, 1926.

⁷⁰Palmer Pillans, personal interview, May 8, 1965.

⁷¹Bureau of Educational Research, Cooperative Study of the Mobile Public Schools, Vol. V. (College of Education, University of Alabama, 1959), p. xviii.

⁷²News item in The Mobile Daily Register, January 13, 1910.

"Rather," he said, "they must be accorded the social and civic status accorded to members of other professions."⁷³

He encouraged his teachers to be active members of both the Alabama Educators Association and the National Education Association.⁷⁴ Minutes of the Board reflect his annual recommendations for the closing of schools to allow teachers to attend State teachers' conventions.

Murphy believed that it was the "plain duty" of every teacher to strive to the utmost to elevate his character and advance the profession of teaching and to promote the cause of education through professional organizations.⁷⁵ He felt that teachers could not solve Alabama's educational problems alone, but should remain united professionally and interest the public in the educational problems of the State..." for upon the satisfactory solution of our school problems," he said, "depends the whole fabric of our social and material welfare."⁷⁶

Murphy's own participation in professional activities seemed to be extensive. He was not merely acquainted with status educational leaders at the state and national level,

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Frank Grove, personal interview, August 21, 1965.

⁷⁵"Alabama Educator's Association Bulletin," op. cit., p. 33.

⁷⁶Ibid.

but his relationship with such persons was "close, personal and intimate."⁷⁷ He was reported to have never missed an annual meeting of the Alabama Education Association or a national meeting of the National Education Association.⁷⁸

William F. Feagin wrote, that while he was connected with the [Alabama State] Department of Education, he did not recall Murphy's failure to attend any state or national meeting. He entered in the spirit of everything and was always ready and willing to do his part.⁷⁹

A measure of Murphy's influence in professional organizations is indicated in the fact that it was through his persuasion the convention of the National Department of Superintendency voted to meet in Mobile in 1911. Charles B. Harvey, manager of the Battle House Hotel, praised Murphy for the manner in which he worked to make Mobile a winner. "Many cities were after it, but Murphy put up a strong fight."⁸⁰

Professional Ethics

Dr. Spright Dowell wrote that, as State Superintendent of Education, Director of Teacher Training, and Presi-

⁷⁷Mrs. S. S. Murphy, personal-interview, April 20, 1964.

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Letter to Olive Dodge from William F. Feagin, November 12, 1924.

⁸⁰News item in The Mobile Register, March 3, 1910.

dent of Alabama Polytechnic Institute, he had every opportunity to "size up" Murphy's ability as an administrator of schools.⁸¹ In order to show the high moral and ethical values with which Murphy was imbued, he referred to the occasion when the Board of School Commissioners was reduced from nine members to five. The Act which provided for this, also directed him to select the five members who would be retained. His following statement, which describes the event, may well show an example of the highest order of professional ethics:

When the power was conferred upon me by law to reduce your Board of Commissioners to its present size, I quite naturally gave Mr. Murphy the opportunity to express himself as to the fitness of the several members on the Board as then constituted for the responsibility. I knew, of course, that all were not equally capable and I felt that his opinion in the matter should be given consideration.

He never did, either by word or act, indicate the slightest preference. Now, he knew that I would treat what he said in confidence and that I would be disposed to give it the most sympathetic consideration. Despite all this, he stated unequivocally that since he was the creature of the board he felt that it would be improper for him to do other than say that he would be absolutely satisfied with whatever I did in the premises.

Dr. Spright Dowell concluded his report with the following summary statement: "This was the most outstanding instance of professional ethics that came under my observa-

⁸¹Letter to R. Percy Roach from Spright Dowell, March 27, 1923.

tion while State Superintendent of Education."⁸²

Honorary Law Degree

To recognize his outstanding work in the field of education, the Board of Trustees of the University of Alabama awarded the Honorary Doctor of Law degree to Murphy on November 8, 1924.⁸³

In acknowledging a congratulatory letter, Murphy stated that it came as a complete surprise and that he had no intimation that such a thing was even being considered.⁸⁴ He said he knew of no political "wire-pulling" which made the recognition all the more appreciated. Although he was personally pleased, he was more grateful that "public education" in the City and County had been so administered as to attract the attention of the Trustees of the University, stating:

Whatever has been accomplished for the good of education in this county is due to the loyal cooperation of a faithful and intelligent corps of teachers, and to them I gladly give a large measure of credit.

I rejoice that the Trustees, in honoring me, have honored the schools, and my teachers who, in the long run, make them what they are.⁸⁵

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Minutes of the Board of Trustees, University of Alabama, November 8, 1924.

⁸⁴ Letter to Mae Eanes from Murphy, November 14, 1924.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

IV. MURPHY'S ILLNESS AND DEATH

For many years Murphy had daily shaved over a small mole on his right cheek, just forward of his ear. When he became concerned that this practice might have serious consequences, he had the mole burned off with X-ray. In relating the incident, Mrs. S. S. Murphy stated that this sealing of the skin seemed to have caused carcinoma and, despite monthly X-ray treatments, he became progressively weaker. Fortunately, he suffered no excruciating pain and carried on his work during most of his confinement.⁸⁶

The seriousness of his illness became evident on Labor Day of September, 1926. He had spent the holiday "over the Bay" [Mobile], but due to a sudden feeling of weakness, he was compelled to return home. During the next two months Assistant Superintendent Vigor visited him daily in order to enable Murphy to carry on his responsibilities from his bed; but, he would not again return to his office.

On November 4, 1926, a special meeting of the Board was held to take official recognition of Murphy's death, which occurred at 1:40 a.m. on that date.⁸⁷ Assistant Superintendent Vigor informed the Board that word had been sent to all the schools informing them of Murphy's death,

⁸⁶ Mrs. S. S. Murphy, personal interview, April 20, 1964.

⁸⁷ "Minutes," 1922-1926, op. cit., p. 485.

with instructions to dismiss school. Plans were then formulated and approved whereby both Negro and white pupils could participate in the funeral.

Tributes and Accolades

Board resolution. With the announcement of the death of Murphy, came immediate expressions of love and appreciation. The first, at the aforementioned meeting, was a motion by Commissioner R. Percy Roach, to draft an appropriate resolution. This posthumous honor was bestowed when the Board unanimously adopted the following resolution at a meeting on November 10, 1926:

WHEREAS, Dr. Samuel S. Murphy was promoted to the position and elected Superintendent of the Public Schools of Mobile City and County on September 5, 1900, and having been elected from term to term has served continuously and with constructive ability in that position until November 4, 1926, and

WHEREAS, God in His Infinite wisdom has seen fit to call him from this earthly life to the eternal life beyond, and

WHEREAS, because of his ability, tact, wisdom and untiring energy, this Public School System has been built up to a healthy, growing system, furnishing almost eighteen thousand children with up-to-date facilities for education, and

WHEREAS, Dr. Murphy was ever a lover of children and was beloved of them, and was loyal to his friends, fair to his teachers, faithful to the cause of education and was beloved of all, more especially by those who worked with him and knew him best, and

WHEREAS, this Board realizes with the deepest sorrow that its co-laborer in the cause of education can be with them no more, and that it will be difficult to fill the place held so long and acceptably by Dr. Murphy, and

WHEREAS, not only the Public Schools, but this whole community and the educational forces of the State at large have lost a most capable and competent educator and citizen, and his family, a loving, tender husband and father.

Now, therefore, this Board of School Commissioners does hereby express its deep sorrow and regret at the death of Dr. Murphy and expresses its appreciation of him as a man, as an educator and Public School Executive, and of his life's work in behalf of the children of this city and county.

This Board does hereby extend to his beloved wife and family its deepest sympathy, and with humble hearts, commends them to the Father on High, the Giver of all good, who alone is able to comfort them in their sorrow, and to furnish aid in this their bereavement:

Be it further resolved that two copies of this resolution be engrossed, one to be sent to the Family of Dr. Murphy and one to be suitably framed and placed in the Board's Room and that a copy be given to the press for publication.⁸⁸

The press coverage on Murphy's death. Reacting promptly to the news of Murphy's demise, The Mobile Register stated on November 5, 1926, that "no citizen of Mobile has played a more enduringly useful part in the life of this city and county in the period of his labors." The editorial further stated:

Education here has lost an able and useful leader. For more than a quarter of a century as head of the public school system here, Mr. Murphy has labored with faithfulness and ability for the cause of education, and as a result of his zeal and intelligent efforts, the public schools here

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 488.

are rated among the best in the state, and the equal of any in the South.⁸⁹

The Mobile News-Item was no less complimentary, as shown in its editorial on the same day by stating:

He devoted his entire life, after graduating from the University of Alabama, to teaching, and he gave to this work all the capacity and energy he possessed. That his labors were appreciated and well rewarded by the community he served was shown by the official position he held for so many years and the honors paid him, both locally and in all parts of Alabama, where he was widely known.⁹⁰

"Many Share Big Tribute." On Saturday, November 6, 1926, The Mobile Register carried an article with this title, which described Murphy's funeral as a "touching tribute, with impressive ceremonies at the Government Street Presbyterian Church." The edifice was described as filled to overflowing with relatives, friends, and admirers of the late educator.

The article told of several hundred school children, white and "colored," who had assembled to pay their last respects. Men, women, and children from every walk of life, City, County, and State officials also witnessed the ceremony which was conducted by Murphy's pastor, Reverend Dunbar H. Ogden, and his close friends, Reverend J. W. Phillips and Reverend C. E. Mount.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Editorial in The Mobile Register, November 5, 1926.

⁹⁰ Editorial in The Mobile News-Item, November 5, 1926.

⁹¹ News item in The Mobile Register, November 6, 1926.

Murphy High School. The Mobile News-Item had written that Murphy had the satisfaction of having lived to see "this splendid school" opened and in operation; and it was a source of pride to him because its "value to present and future generations of children is incalculable."⁹²

Because of his concern for children, and the value of such a school to future generations, Murphy may have counted the final honor which the Board paid him as his most significant.

On October 18, 1928, Commissioner John Cochran addressed the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County, stating that schools frequently bear the name of some individual whose memory the citizens desire to honor and perpetuate. He reminded the Board that Mobile's new high school was completed just a short time before the death of a citizen who devoted his life from early manhood through a period of thirty-five years to the service of the children of Mobile. He further stated that it would be a fitting honor and a deserving tribute that, "this new building, which, in a material sense, was the crowning achievement of a man loved by his associates at home and abroad, bear the name of one of Alabama's most beloved and useful educators, Mobile's own Samuel S. Murphy."

⁹² Editorial in The Mobile News-Item, November 5, 1926.

Mr. Cochran then made a formal proposal, that the new high school be named the Murphy High School, in "honor of him who is affectionately remembered as one who loved children."

The motion was adopted.⁹³

⁹³"Minutes," 1926-1930, op. cit., p. 175.

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APPENDIX A

DUTIES OF THE MEDICAL INSPECTOR¹

1. The medical inspector shall make at least two general, complete, routine inspections of every city school; one before the Christmas Holidays for contagious diseases only; and a second inspection, beginning in March of each year.
2. A similar inspection of the suburban schools (because of the close relation between their pupils and those of the city schools) should also be made either before said holiday or as soon thereafter as possible.
3. An inspection should be made sometime during the term of every county school of sufficient size to require two teachers. (This proviso is made because in smaller schools there is a minimum of protection given as the pupils rarely observe restrictions out of school and the isolation of the community makes the inspection result in the theoretical protection of a few at the cost of disorganization of the school.)
4. The inspector should be subject to calls to visit any school for the purpose of making inspection of special cases, or conditions existing.
5. The inspector should have a definite hour at his office at which time pupils can be sent to him by teachers or parents either for inspection of suspected ailments or for the purpose of obtaining readmission to the schools.
6. The inspector should never prescribe for a pupil at school or visit the home of a pupil as the school medical inspector. In giving professional service either at his office or at the home of a pupil, he should make it clear that he does so in a private capacity and not as a school official.

He should refer parents to their family physician, never suggesting his own services and only give them when specially requested with the above distinction clearly understood by the parent.

¹"Minutes of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County," 1913-1916, p. 24.

7. The inspector should see that the principals are furnished with charts for testing the eyes and for aiding in the recognition of the early symptoms of infections and contagious diseases. He should attend meetings of principals and teachers and instruct them in the making of tests, for defective sight and hearing, and in other medical matters which would increase their efficiency in aiding the inspector to promote the hygienic condition of the schools.

8. The inspector should make a report to the superintendent of any unsanitary conditions existing in schools visited by him.

9. The inspector should inspect all plans for new buildings and see that hygienic requirements and sanitary arrangements have been provided for.

10. The inspector should keep constantly in touch with the superintendent, keeping him informed as to his work and should make a monthly and annual report of schools visited and work done:

This committee recommends that all expenses incurred by the medical inspector in visiting the country schools shall be paid by the Board.

APPENDIX B

DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE¹

Section 9. It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to supervise the erection, repairs, and improvements of school buildings within the city limits; recommend alterations or additions to school buildings, and such improvements to school grounds as may be found necessary or deemed expedient. It shall recommend to the Board, the establishment of new schools within the city limits, and shall consider and report on the advisability of changing the location of, or discontinuing any school already established. When directed by the Board, it shall cause to be prepared plans and specifications for new buildings or extensive repairs and shall recommend such heating and ventilating [sic] systems as to it seem best, and report same to the Board before final action.

It shall make recommendations regarding changes in the boundaries of school districts within the city limits.

It shall be the duty of this committee to receive the recommendations of the Superintendent regarding the selection of principals, assistants, special supervisors and substitute teachers, as provided for under the head of "Teacher--Qualifications and Employment." It shall recommend, jointly with the Committee on Finance, the salaries to be paid teachers whom it nominates. It shall be its duty to inquire carefully into the character and qualifications of all applicants for employment as teachers in the city*schools.

At the regular meeting, in May of each year, the committee shall report to the Board a full list of city teachers recommended for employment, together with the salary schedule.

It shall report to the Board any recommendations relative to the opening and the closing of the schools, and the time and length of vacations, and such days as are set apart as holidays.

The Executive Committee shall visit the several schools of the city, either jointly or as individual members; note the general condition of the buildings and grounds, observe the general work, discipline and progress of the schools; and report to the Board such suggestions as the committee may deem of interest or

¹By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County (Mobile: Mobile Book Binding Company, 1912), pp. 4-5.

of benefit to the schools. It shall perform such other duties as may be required of it by the Board, or which in its judgment will serve to promote the best interests of the Public Schools.

APPENDIX C

DUTIES OF THE COUNTRY SCHOOL COMMITTEE¹

Section 10. The Committee on Country Schools shall have special charge of all the schools in Mobile County outside of the city limits. It shall be the duty of this committee, assisted by the Superintendent, to canvass all applicants for employment in the country schools, giving careful inquiry into the character and qualifications of each applicant, and jointly with the Committee on Finance, shall recommend the salary to be paid teachers whom it nominates.

At the regular meeting in June of each year, it shall recommend a full list of teachers, together with the salary schedule, for country schools, as provided for under the head of "Teachers--Qualifications and Employment." In those country schools where janitor's service is deemed necessary, it shall advise the Superintendent in the selection of suitable persons to take charge of school property, fix the compensation of same, and submit the same to the Board for ratification.

The Country School Committee shall recommend the erection, repair and improvement of school buildings in the Country, and shall suggest such improvements to the school grounds as it thinks necessary. It shall examine and report upon all questions respecting the establishment, alterations, or additions to school buildings.

This committee shall make recommendations regarding the changes in location of schools, or the boundaries of any school districts and the consolidation or discontinuance of any school or schools already established outside the city limits.

In September of each year, the committee shall select three suitable persons to act as trustees for each school in the country, define the powers and duties of same, and recommend their election to the Board, for a period of one year or until their successors are elected. Said trustees may be removed at any time upon recommendation of the committee.

The Country School Committee shall have authority to visit any country school under its charge whenever such visit, in its judgment, is necessary to settle difficulties and dissensions which cannot be satisfactorily settled other than by a visit of the committee, whose expense shall be paid by the Board.

¹By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County (Mobile: Mobile Book Binding Company, 1912), pp. 5-6.

When new schools are to be located, or extensive repairs to be made, this committee shall have authority to visit such locality, when it deems such visit necessary to ascertain conditions and form an intelligent idea of the situation. It shall report all such visits to the Board, and shall be allowed all necessary expenses incurred on account of such visits, which expense shall be charged against the school to which the visit was made.

This committee shall advise with the Superintendent upon all matters connected with the country schools, and make such recommendations as will, in its judgment promote the usefulness and efficiency of the schools under its care; and shall act upon such other matters relating to the country schools as may from time to time be referred to it by the Board.

APPENDIX D

DUTIES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE¹

Section 11. The Committee on Finance shall have general supervision of the financial interest of the Board, and shall, from time to time, make such suggestions and recommendations as they deem wise, regarding the finances of the Board, and the expenditures beyond the income of the Board. This committee shall see that all school buildings, furniture and apparatus belonging to the Board, are safely insured against loss by fire, etc. It shall be the duty of this committee to examine and audit all claims against the Board, and recommend same for payment when found correct. It shall carefully examine the books and vouchers of the Superintendent, and shall report all monies received and disbursed by this officer. Once each month it shall examine the books, accounts and records of the Secretary, and shall supervise and direct the general system of conducting the office work. It shall be its duty to verify and certify to the monthly pay-roll. At the regular meeting each month, this committee shall submit to the Board a written report, showing the receipts and expenditures of the Board, the balance on hand, and the appropriation necessary to cover current bills approved, together with an itemized statement of all bills recommended for payment by said committee. Whenever the Executive Committee or the Committee on Country Schools shall meet to fix the salaries of teachers, the Committee on Finance shall meet and confer with them for the purpose of advising as to the financial condition of the Board.

Annually, in the month of September, this committee shall prepare or have prepared a budget and present to the Board, setting forth the probable cost of maintaining the schools for the ensuing year, and shall furnish as accurate an estimate as possible of the amount of funds that will be available for school purposes during the fiscal year.

It shall consider and report on such matters of school finance as may be referred to it, from time to time, by the Board.

¹By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County (Mobile: Mobile Book Binding Company, 1912), pp. 6-7.

APPENDIX E

DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL LANDS¹

Section 12. The Committee on School Lands shall have general supervision of all lands vested, or that may be vested, in the Board for educational purposes, and shall have authority to arrange for the lease of same, subject to the ratification of the Board. It shall take such steps as are necessary to protect said lands or timber from depredation or waste, and perform such other duties, relative to school lands, as it deems wise, or that may be required by the Board from time to time.

¹By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County (Mobile: Mobile Book Binding Company, 1912), p. 7.

APPENDIX F

DUTIES OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE¹

Section 13. During September of each year the President of the Board shall appoint one member for each of the schools within the city limits. It shall be the duty of such member to visit the school to which he is appointed as often as practicable, and not less than once in each month. He shall inspect the buildings, grounds and furniture, paying especial attention to the sanitary arrangements; shall observe the order, discipline and general work of the school, and shall make report to the Board.

The Country School Committee shall compose the visiting committee for the schools outside the city limits. It shall visit whenever it finds it practicable; shall observe the general conditions of the school visited and make report to the Board. All necessary expense incurred on such visits shall be paid out of the funds of the Board.

¹By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County (Mobile: Mobile Book Binding Company, 1912), p. 7.

APPENDIX G

POWERS AND DUTIES OF PRINCIPALS¹

Section 1. It shall be the duty of the principal to enforce all Rules and Regulations of the Board, and to carry out the directions and suggestions of the Superintendent.

Section 2. Principals will be held responsible for the general management of their schools, and for the discipline of the pupils while in school or about the school premises.

Section 3. It shall be the duty of the principal, or such assistants as he may designate, to accompany pupils to the play grounds at recess, in order to prevent any excesses, improprieties, or, violations of the school rules.

Section 4. Principals shall be present at their respective school buildings thirty minutes before the time for the opening of the schools, and in cold or rainy weather admit pupils to the buildings.

Section 5. The principal shall send, the first week in each month, a requisition for all necessary supplies, to the office of the Secretary. Requisitions shall be made at no other time, except in cases of emergency.

Section 6. It shall be the duty of the principal to see that all assistant teachers are supplied with necessary articles connected with their school work.

Section 7. They shall hold such teachers' meetings in their respective departments as they deem necessary, or that may be ordered by the Superintendent, requiring all assistants to attend.

Section 8. Principals will be required to be present at all principals meetings called by the Superintendent.

Section 9. Principals shall report to the Superintendent, in writing, all cases of negligence, inefficiency, willful violations of the school rules, and insubordination to authority, on the part of assistants.

Section 10. Principals shall have immediate control over janitors, and shall advise them in the proper discharge of their duties, reporting to the Secretary any guilty of inefficiency, neglect of duty, insubordination, or violations of the rules governing janitors.

¹By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County (Mobile: Mobile Book Binding Company, 1912), pp. 16-19.

Section 11. The principals of each school building of two stories or more shall have fire drills at least once each month. The following signals shall be posted near the gong:

--Official Fire Signals--

Several rapid strokes of the gong, followed by TWO STROKES (Haste) without hats, wraps or books.

Several rapid strokes of the gong, followed by THREE STROKES (Moderate), with hats, wraps and books.

One stroke of gong, return to rooms.

Section 12. Each principal shall be provided with a register in which shall be entered the name, the age, the residence, the name of the parent or guardian, the date of entrance and discharge of each pupil, and such other facts as may be required by the Board or the Superintendent.

Section 13. Principals shall not criticise or correct teachers in the presence of pupils. Whenever criticism is thought necessary, the principal shall see the teacher in private, and in a courteous manner call attention to mistakes in method or manner and advise the best means of correcting and improving same.

Section 14. Principals shall see that all records in their schools are properly and neatly kept, attend to the distribution of blanks for reports, etc., and collect and forward all necessary reports to the Superintendent at the proper time.

Section 15. At the close of the school term, the principal shall see that the records of teachers are properly made out and returned to the office of the Superintendent, and no teacher will be paid his or her last month's salary, who fails to accurately and promptly make up his or her records and return to the principal.

Section 16. Principals shall prohibit talking, running, or unnecessary noise, in the halls, or on the stairways, and shall enforce such regulations as will insure the buildings, furniture, apparatus and grounds being kept in proper condition.

Section 17. The principal shall keep a faithful record of his attendance and tardiness and that of his assistants, from school duties or meetings called by him, said record constituting a part of the principal's monthly report to the Superintendent.

Section 18. Corporal punishment shall be administered by the principal ONLY, and never in the presence of the class or the school. Corporal punishment is to be avoided when obedience can be enforced by milder measures and must not be cruel or excessive. The

principal shall keep a record of all cases of corporal punishment, on blanks provided for that purpose, and shall submit same to the Superintendent along with his monthly report.

Section 19. The principal shall report, in writing, to the Secretary, any loss or damage to school property, together with name of the person, if any, responsible for such damage.

Section 20. Principals may suspend pupils for persistent disobedience, vulgarity, habitual truancy, determined opposition to the rules of the school, and for such other offenses, as, in their judgment, are detrimental to the best interest of the schools.

Section 21. In all cases of suspension the principal shall immediately acquaint, in writing, the parent or guardian, and the Superintendent, setting forth the nature of the offense. The Superintendent may reinstate the offending pupil upon such terms as he deems best, or sustain the suspension, and report the matter to the Executive or Country School Committee at its next regular meeting.

Section 22. Principals shall visit, as often as practicable, all the departments under their charge, and advise with the teachers as to discipline and such other matters as will tend to increase the efficiency of the schools.

Section 23. Principals shall, in no case, admit pupils from other school districts, unless provided with transfer cards, filled in and signed by the principal, and countersigned by the Superintendent or the Assistant Superintendent.

Section 24. It shall be the duty of the principals to examine and classify all pupils, without promotion cards, applying for admission to their schools, and shall not enroll non-resident pupils except upon written authority from the Superintendent.

Section 25. Principals shall not dismiss their schools for a day or a part of a day, except in cases of emergency, and then notice of such dismissal shall be furnished the Superintendent.

Section 26. Not later than the fifth of each month, principals shall render to the Superintendent a monthly report, on blanks provided for that purpose, and at the close of the session shall submit a written report covering the general condition of their schools for the past session, and their estimate of the assistant teachers and substitutes under their charge.

Section 27. Principals are required to sustain and assist their teachers in every way possible.

Section 28. Principals shall be directly responsible to the Superintendent, to whom they shall make all reports prescribed by the Rules and Regulations, or which the Superintendent and the Board may require from time to time.

Section 29. Principals shall be governed by all the rules under the heading, "Duties of Teachers," so far as applies to them as teachers.

APPENDIX H

DUTIES OF THE SUPERINTENDENT¹

1. The Superintendent is executive officer of the Board, and shall at all times act with the Board's authority.

His entire time shall be devoted to his services to the Mobile County school system, and he shall not engage in any other occupation.

2. He shall have general supervision of all the schools, teachers, apparatus, course of study, methods of instruction, and employees of the schools, and shall see that all rules and regulations of the Board are faithfully observed, and to this end shall see that each teacher is provided with a copy of the Rules and Regulations.

3. The Superintendent shall visit at least monthly each of the city schools, observing carefully the discipline, method of instruction, modes of government, and the general efficiency of all teachers.

4. The Superintendent shall fill all vacancies occurring during term time, and shall make such other temporary arrangements relative to the schools as he may deem proper, and report same to the Board at its next regular meeting.

5. Monthly he shall submit to the Board a synopsis of the principals' reports, showing the enrollment, attendance, etc., in each school, and such other statistical and official information as the Board may require.

6. At the end of the scholastic year he shall submit a written report to the Board giving account of the progress of the schools, in all departments.

7. In January of each year, he shall, after conferences with the heads of the various departments, submit plans for the next session. These plans shall embrace scholastic programmes and the physical needs and requirements.

8. Prior to the regular meeting of the Board in March of each year, the Superintendent shall submit to the Committee of the Board as a Whole, a list of all teachers nominated for employment for the following term, with ratings and salaries of each. After the election by the Board the Superintendent shall promptly notify teachers and other employees of their election, and obtain their signatures to the contracts.

¹By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County (Mobile: Mobile Book Binding Company, 1923), pp. 7-10.

9. The Superintendent shall figure the salaries of all teachers in accordance with the schedule approved by the Board.

10. In securing additional teachers to fill vacancies and to extend and improve the service after the regular nomination and election of teachers, the Superintendent shall have power to act, but he shall report each teacher secured, and for what service and at what salary, at the next regular meeting of the Board. This shall be a regular feature of the Superintendent's report.

11. He shall hold teachers responsible for the proper discharge of their official duties, and whenever he doubts the qualifications, efficiency or fitness of any teacher for the place assigned, he shall report same to the Board.

12. He shall prescribe the rules for the promotion of pupils from grade to grade, and shall determine the conditions thereof. He shall conduct or cause to be conducted examinations as may appear to him for the best interest of the schools.

13. He shall be present at all meetings of the Board, unless excused, and at all meetings of committees when requested to do so.

14. He shall keep regular office hours during term time, when he can be seen by parents, teachers or pupils.

15. He shall have authority to transfer pupils from one school to another when overcrowded, or when such course seems to be for the best interest of the pupils and the school, and when such action would relieve extreme inconvenience when attending school.

16. He shall have general supervision of the course of instruction, discipline, textbooks and other matters relating to the internal management of the schools.

17. He shall have authority to transfer any teacher from one school to another when it is for the best interest of the school, provided that such transfer does not operate to decrease the salary of the teacher. Such transfers shall be promptly reported to the Board at its next meeting.

18. He shall make careful investigation of all complaints made by parents or guardians against teachers, and endeavor to bring about an amicable settlement, and report such cases to the proper committee whenever necessary.

19. All complaints against teachers, officers and existing rules shall be filed in writing, and same will not be considered unless this is done.

20. In case of insubordination of principal or teacher, or the refusal of principal or teacher to carry out any request of the Superintendent, the Superintendent has the power to suspend said principal or teacher. He shall report his action to the Board at its next meeting for its action.

21. He shall have power to place pupils in a lower class after consultation with the principal, when such pupils have failed to make a satisfactory record in their studies, provided previous notice has been given to the parent or guardian of the unsatisfactory work.

22. The Superintendent shall perform such additional duties as may be imposed by the acts of the Legislature, or that from time to time may be required by the Board.

23. The Superintendent shall have jurisdiction over suspended pupils, until he either reinstates such pupils or until he shall report such suspensions to the Board for its action.

24. The Superintendent, as executive officer of the Board, is empowered, acting as such officer, to sign in the name of the Board, all deeds, bills of sale, contracts or other evidences of debt, and other legal documents to which the Board is a party, except such as by other resolution or action, are to be signed by the President or other officer or employee of the Board.

25. It shall be the duty of the Superintendent to hold regular meetings with his department heads for the coordination of the departments. This shall apply to the heads of the main divisions of the system, and to the heads of the directors of Physical Training, Health, Attendance and Welfare, Music and Domestic Science, as well. The proper relation of the work of any new supervisor or directing teacher to the system shall be a special charge upon the Superintendent.

26. At the regular meeting in July, the Superintendent shall recommend to the Board the school calendar for the ensuing school year, specifying the dates for the opening and the closing, the holidays, etc., in detail.

27. The Superintendent shall certify and present to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Board, not less than one week prior to the close of the calendar month, the teachers' pay-roll, prepared by the principal, showing amount due each teacher and substitute teacher, together with days taught, days excused, and all proper deductions. The Secretary-Treasurer shall examine

said pay-roll, and if found correct, shall issue checks in accordance therewith, and have same ready for distribution on the first day of each calendar month during the life of contracts.

APPENDIX I

DUTIES OF THE TREASURER OF THE BOARD¹

1. The Treasurer of the Board, shall, before entering upon his duties, execute a bond in the sum of forty thousand dollars, and such additional sum as the Board may from time to time require; premium of said bond to be paid by the Board. The bond so furnished shall be approved by the President of the Board and the Judge of Probate of Mobile County.

2. The bond shall guarantee the faithful discharge of his duties as Treasurer of said Board, and said bond shall be kept by the Judge of Probate. The Treasurer shall be the receiving and disbursing officer of the Board. All monies coming into his hands shall be disbursed as provided for under "School Funds."

3. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer of the Board to keep true and accurate account of all monies received and paid out of the treasury; from whom and on what account received, and to whom and on what account paid out.

4. The Treasurer shall make deposits in such banks as the Board may from time to time designate, and such deposits shall be made in accord with the Board's plan of distribution of funds among the banks.

5. The Treasurer shall give close attention to the budget allowance and shall not permit any overdraft for any item therein until notice of such need is brought to the attention of the Board, and by its action provision made to cover such item.

¹ By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County (Mobile: Mobile Book Binding Company, 1912), p. 10.

APPENDIX J

DUTIES OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT¹

1. For the purpose of aiding the Superintendent in closer supervision of the schools, in securing uniformity and thoroughness in the course of instruction, judicious and efficient discipline in both teachers and pupils, an Assistant Superintendent shall be elected by the Board.

2. It shall be his duty to report at once to the Superintendent any teacher, who in his judgment, is incompetent or neglectful in the discharge of his duties; guilty of irregularities or delinquencies, and whose further services and connection with the schools will not be beneficial thereto.

3. While visiting the schools he shall note the condition of the buildings regarding repairs and equipment, etc., and shall report same to the Superintendent.

4. The Assistant Superintendent shall examine the reports of County teachers with regard to accuracy and neatness, and shall have authority to have corrected reports made. At the close of the term he shall see that all records, books and necessary blanks are correctly and properly made out, and no teacher shall be entitled to the last month's salary until such records are approved and turned into the office of the Superintendent.

5. He shall have authority, subject to the approval of the Superintendent, to settle any differences that may arise among teachers and parents of the Country schools, and shall make a full report of such cases to the Superintendent. He is authorized to countersign transfer blanks used in the schools.

6. When requested to do so by the Superintendent, he shall conduct the meetings held for country teachers, and shall perform such other duties as the Board or the Superintendent may direct.

7. He shall endeavor to acquaint himself with the school systems of other rural districts and such facts relating to public education as will enable him to offer the best educational advantages to the pupils of the Country schools.

8. He shall attend the meetings of the Board, and of the Country School Committee when requested to do so.

¹By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County (Mobile: Mobile Book Binding Company, 1912), pp. 11-12.

9. It shall be the duty of the Assistant Superintendent to see that all country teachers faithfully observe and carry out the rules and regulations of the Board.

10. At the close of the school year and at such other times as may be called for by the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent shall submit a written report to the Superintendent, covering the general condition of the country schools and the efficiency of the teachers employed therein, and make such recommendations as, in his opinion, will improve the efficiency of the country schools.

11. All orders emanating from the Board, relative to the management of the country schools shall be given to the Superintendent, and through him to the Assistant Superintendent. The Assistant Superintendent shall be subject to the orders of the Board and the Superintendent, and shall from time to time confer with them relative to matters affecting the interest of country schools.

APPENDIX K

DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY OF THE BOARD¹

1. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to be present at all meetings of the Board and to keep in a book provided for that purpose, accurate minutes of all its proceedings in accordance with stenographic records. Correction of minutes shall be made below the President's signature of the corrected minutes in same manner (typewritten or in ink) as used for minutes regularly. On margin of minutes where correction applies a marginal note shall be made stating the page where correction can be found. No erasure shall be made, or strip pasted on, to make correction.

He shall act as secretary at all meetings of the committee, keeping such records of the meeting as the committee may direct.

2. The Secretary shall notify or cause to be notified all members and officers of the Board of all regular and special meetings of the Board; shall notify members of committee meetings when requested to do so by the chairman. He shall be the custodian of all securities, deeds, insurance policies, books of records and other papers belonging to the Board.

3. He shall prepare and keep before the Board a calendar that will keep before the Board, at the proper time, the matters for needed consideration and action.

4. He shall be the general accountant of the Board, and shall preserve all accounts and contracts relating to the public schools. He shall prepare all financial reports requested by the Board, Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Business Assistant, and Finance Committee. He shall prepare the financial reports requested and required by the State and the National Bureau of Education.

5. He shall furnish the Chairman of the Finance Committee weekly a statement of the balances held with the various banks. He shall furnish monthly to all members of the Board a budget statement showing the appropriation, amount expended, the unexpended balance, and contracts placed against appropriations for the various items as listed in the budget.

6. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to present to the Board all communications intended for them, at the first regular meeting after the receipt thereof.

7. He shall on or near the first of the month, under the direction of the Superintendent, prepare the pay-

¹By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County (Mobile: Mobile Book Binding Company, 1912), pp. 12-13.

roll for the teachers and other employees of the Board, and have the checks ready for the signatures of the constituted authorities of the Board.

8. The Secretary shall keep full and systematic accounts of all receipts and expenditures under double entry system of accounting, and shall keep a monthly trial balance in a special trial balance book.

9. He shall give good and sufficient bond, to be approved by the Board, in the penal sum of \$10,000, or such additional sum as the Board may from time to time require, for the faithful performance of his duties as Secretary. The premium of said bond shall be paid by the Board and the bond shall be filed with the Probate Judge of Mobile County.

VITA

Frank Schneider was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, on November 11, 1922, and attended the public schools in that City. Following his graduation from Fortier High School in 1940, he attended Southeastern Louisiana College where, after a period of military service during World War II, he was awarded the B.M.Ed. degree. A year later he received the M.M.Ed. degree from Louisiana State University.

From 1947 to 1958 he served as teacher in Covington, Louisiana, for the St. Tammany Parish School Board, and in DeRidder, Louisiana, for the Beauregard Parish School Board; and as supervising instructor at Northwestern State College in Natchitoches, Louisiana.

In 1958 he was appointed instructional supervisor for the Mobile Public School System and in 1963 was assigned to the principalship of Murphy High School. In 1964 he was transferred to the position of Assistant Superintendent in Charge of Curriculum and Instruction, the position which he now holds.

EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Frank Schneider

Major Field: Education

Title of Thesis: Samuel S. Murphy: Superintendent of the Mobile Public Schools
From 1900-1926

Approved:

C. W. Hilton

Major Professor and Chairman

Max Goodrich

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Edneyline

Thomas R. Sanders

D E Shipp

William M. Smiter

Everett Tamm

Date of Examination:

June 13, 1966